

Arafat leaves early for Britain visit

GAZA CITY (AFP) — Palestinian President Yasser Arafat left a day early Sunday for an official visit to Britain to enroll London's help in promoting the peace process following the right-wing victory in Israel's elections. Mr. Arafat left his Gaza City headquarters a day earlier than scheduled but contrary to earlier reports did not fly out of the newly inaugurated Palestinian airport at Rafah, in the south of the Gaza Strip officials said. Mr. Arafat's personal jet flew into the airport earlier the same day from Al Arish, Egypt, in a symbolic christening of the unfinished facility (see page 12) and officials had said the Palestinian leader would use the airport for the first time Monday to fly to London. Instead Mr. Arafat left by car for Al Arish, from where he was to fly to Cairo and then on to London, his office said. There was no explanation for the change of plans and Israeli officials said they had not intervened to block the flight.

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Princess Basma meets Arab fund head

AMMAN (Petra) — Her Royal Highness Princess Basma on Sunday received Chairman of the Arab Fund for Economic and Social Development Abdul Latif Al Hamad. Princess Basma briefed Mr. Hamad on the activities of the Queen Alia Fund in providing citizens with income-generating projects and help them market their products. Princess Basma stressed the role of Jordanian women in public life in all aspects, pointing to the National Committee for Women Affairs, the national strategy to improve the status of women and their participation in constructing the Kingdom's economy on equal footing with men. In an interview with Jordan TV, Mr. Hamad said he will sign an agreement with Minister of Planning Rima Khalaf whereby the fund will provide \$100 million to finance Aqaba power plant. He also said that he will discuss with Dr. Khalaf cooperation between Jordan and the fund for the coming years.

Airport gets new weather system

AMMAN (Petra) — Deputising for His Majesty King Hussein, Minister of Transport Naser Lawzi on Sunday inaugurated a JD 660,000 automatic meteorology system at Queen Alia International Airport. The new system will provide information on weather conditions to aircrafts. It will also provide the control tower and the radar control centre with information on visibility, speed and direction of winds, clouds, temperature, and humidity and air pressure. Also on Sunday Mr. Lawzi chaired a meeting to discuss a study on upgrading Jordanian airports, carried out by a Dutch consulting company. The project will be carried out at a cost of JD 2.5 million, 40 per cent of which will be provided as a gift from the Dutch government. The remaining 60 per cent will be provided in the form of a soft Dutch loan.

Turkish Islamic party vows to annul accord with Israel

CAIRO (AFP) — Turkey's pro-Islamic Welfare Party will cancel a military accord with Israel if it comes to power, Abdullah Gul, the party's deputy leader responsible for foreign relations, said in an interview published Sunday. "Welfare will nullify the Israeli-Turkish military accord if it comes to power and the United States will not be able to pressure us in the matter," Mr. Gul told the Arabic newspaper Al Hayat. "We do not accept any accord with Israel even if similar accords have been struck with other countries," he said. The accord, which allows the Israeli air force to train at Turkish bases and vice versa, raised cries of protest from Arab countries, especially Syria and Egypt. Mr. Gul said his party had "a constructive dialogue" with Cairo, Damascus and Khartoum, adding that "for Turkey's strategic interests, we need a strong Syria, Egypt and Sudan."

Sudan accepts unity with Egypt, Libya

KHARTOUM (AFP) — Sudanese President Omar Al Bashir said Sunday country is prepared to unify with Libya and Egypt in line with a proposal by Libyan leader Muammar Qadhafi. "Sudan supports the call by Qadhafi for integration and unity of Sudan, Libya and Egypt," General Bashir said during talks with a Libyan envoy, Suleiman Al Shahumi, quoted by the state news agency SUNA. "Sudan is ready for immediate meetings at any level to discuss the issue," he said. Col. Qadhafi called for unification of the three neighbours during a five-day visit to Cairo last week.

Netanyahu appeals for Israeli unity and peace with Arabs

Premier-elect pledges to pursue negotiations, urges Arab states to join 'the circle of peace' Christopher says U.S. may have to adapt policy but Netanyahu keeps cards to himself in coalition talks

TEL AVIV (Agencies) — Prime Minister-elect Benjamin Netanyahu appealed Sunday for unity among Israelis and peace with Palestinians and Israel's neighbours in his first speech since the right-wing victory in national elections.

"Peace begins at home," Mr. Netanyahu told a boisterous gathering of 3,000 militants from his nationalist Likud Party celebrating his victory over Labour incumbent Shimon Peres in Israel's first direct election for prime minister.

Acknowledging the deep divisions in Israeli society over how to proceed with the troubled peace process, Mr. Netanyahu said, "Israeli society is broken into competing currents. It must learn patience, mutual respect."

"First we must make peace among ourselves," he said, declaring himself "the prime minister of everyone, Jews and non-Jews, long-time residents and new immigrants."

"We must also continue on the path to peace with the outside world," he continued.

"We want to pursue the dialogue with all our neighbours to obtain a real peace, a peace with security," he said, returning to theme which dominated his campaign for last Wednesday's elections.

"I said the peace remains at home, but it has to be continued abroad," Mr. Netanyahu said. "We intend to further the process of dialogue with all our neighbours to reach a stable peace, a real peace, a peace with security."

Mr. Netanyahu's 30-minute speech was the first glimpse of what positions he will take in office. He will formally take over after forming a coalition government during the 45-day period allowed.

"The government we will form in a few days, with God's help, will strengthen the peaceful relations that have already been established with Jordan and with Egypt and will continue the negotiations with the Palestinians," the Likud Party leader said.

"And we will also work to

further peace deals and coexistence with other Arab states. I call on them also to join the circle of peace," Mr. Netanyahu said in his victory speech.

The phrase "circle of peace" was often used by the United States, which had backed Mr. Peres, 72, as the man who had guided Middle East peace talks this far.

"Israel and America are like a rock," Mr. Netanyahu, 46, said of Israel's most important ally. "Our relationship is based not on interest but on friendship."

In Geneva, U.S. Secretary of State Warren Christopher signalled that the United States may have to adapt its Mideast policy in light of the Israeli election but said it was too soon to make any changes.

He made his comments in interviews after a telephone conversation with Mr. Netanyahu, who assured Mr. Christopher he would continue pursuing the peace process.

"We have to find out what

Peres: Israel must honour peace accords with PLO

Outgoing cabinet says it is leaving Hebron withdrawal to Netanyahu

TEL AVIV (Agencies) — Prime Minister Shimon Peres said on Sunday in his first public appearance since losing Israel's election that the Jewish state must honour its peace accords with the Palestine Liberation Organisation (PLO) even if it does not like Yasser Arafat's "dreams."

"Right now our nation must respect the agreements that we have achieved even if we don't like the dreams that our partners may have," he said in an emotional speech in an outdoor ceremony at the Hebrew University in Jerusalem.

Mr. Peres said Mr. Arafat, Israel's partner to several peace accords, had dreams no different than those of Egyptian President Anwar Sadat, who made peace with Israel in 1979 when it was led by Mr. Peres's Likud party rival, Menachem Begin.

Mr. Peres thanked U.S. President Bill Clinton for leading an international coalition against "terrorism."

Mr. Peres called Mr. Clinton "a great president... who devoted much of his talents and time to help us to come together."

Earlier Sunday, a cabinet statement said Mr. Peres will not pull Israeli soldiers out of parts of the West Bank city of Hebron before right-winger Benjamin Netanyahu takes office.

The strongly worded statement put the prime minister-elect on the spot, stressing that Israel was committed to the redeployment in the eyes of the world and under its peace deals with the PLO.

Mr. Netanyahu has said that he opposed leaving Hebron.

"This is a test for the new government in Israel," said Hebron Mayor Mustafa Natshe, adding that any Netanyahu failure to implement peace agreements signed by the outgoing Labour government could spur the Palestinians to violence.

Mr. Peres delayed the partial pullout, originally scheduled for March 28, after suicide bombings killed 59 people in Israel in February and March.

"The matter will be transferred to the incoming administration to deal with," the cabinet statement said, noting that Israel had made an "international commitment" to hand over West Bank cities to Palestinian self-rule.

The redeployment must take place about a month after the understanding with the Palestinian Authority was reached.

King visits army units

His Majesty King Hussein on Sunday addresses soldiers during a visit he paid to armed forces units. The units that the King visited included the Al Hussein central workshops, the Royal Maintenance Corps, which is rebuilding armoured vehicles, the Fifth Royal Armoured Division and the Al Hussein Second Mechanised Battalion. The King was accompanied on the visit by Their Royal Highnesses Prince Abdullah and Prince Ali, Prime Minister and Defence Minister Abdul Karim Kabariti, Royal Court Chief Awn Khasawneh and Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff Field Marshal Abdul Hafez Miral (Armed forces photo)



Trilateral summit is on schedule at Aqaba on Wednesday — King

By a Jordan Times Staff reporter with agency dispatches

AMMAN — His Majesty King Hussein has affirmed that plans were on track for a summit in Aqaba on Wednesday grouping himself with Egyptian President Hosni Mubarak and Palestinian President Yasser Arafat and that he was convinced that Israeli right-winger Premier-elect Benjamin Netanyahu would pursue the Middle East peace process.

Speaking in an interview with four foreign journalists on Saturday, the King also

said a chance should be given to Mr. Netanyahu to "shoulder his responsibilities."

King Hussein said the summit between Jordan, Egypt and the Palestinian National Authority (PNA) would take place on June 5 in Aqaba without Mr. Netanyahu.

The King said the changes taking place in Israel would not allow Mr. Netanyahu to take up an invitation to attend the meeting, but that he hoped "a later summit will bring us together after he

(Netanyahu) had formed his government."

Earlier Saturday a senior Jordanian official had said the date of the Aqaba summit would not be set until Mr. Netanyahu had formed his government.

King Hussein, who is due to visit the United States in the next few days, told journalists late Saturday that "the idea of inviting the Israeli prime minister to take part in the tripartite summit had been floated in Cairo" on May 12.

President Hosni Mubarak, Mr. Arafat and King Hussein

met in Cairo on May 12 and agreed to meet again in June.

They had planned to invite Israel's incumbent Prime Minister Shimon Peres, an architect of Israel's peace agreements with the Palestinians and Jordan.

The June 5 summit will now centre on relations between the three parties in the light of the Likud leader's victory in Israel's elections.

In his comments on Saturday, the King also confirmed that attempts had been made to carry out extremist attacks

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GCC decries Iran military build-up

RIYADH (AFP) — Gulf Arab foreign ministers on Sunday accused Iran of a military buildup which posed a "serious threat" to the region and warned it against meddling in unrest-hit Bahrain.

Saudi Arabia, Kuwait, Bahrain, Qatar, the United Arab Emirates (UAE) and Oman are "concerned" about an Iranian buildup which "exceeds its ordinary and legitimate defence needs," the ministers said in an unusually harsh statement.

The buildup "constitutes a serious threat to peace and security in the region," the ministers of the six Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC) states added following a regular meeting in the Saudi capital.

"The council urges the international community to deploy efforts so that the Gulf region is protected from weapons of mass destruction," the statement said.

The ministers also called on Iran "not to interfere in the internal affairs of Bahrain and other member countries, and not to resort or encourage acts of sabotage, and to respect the sovereignty and independence of council states."

The official Bahraini press in January openly accused Iran of "menting the unrest which has been led by Shiite Muslims demanding a restoration of the parliament suspended in 1975 by the authorities."

At least 22 people have died in the unrest since it erupted in December 1994. Iran rejects allegations of involvement, while Sultan Qaboos of Oman has called the crisis in Bahrain and internal crisis that required a solution from within.

The GCC also condemned "repeated Iranian measures" concerning the strategic Gulf islands of Abu Musa, Greater Tunb and Lesser Tunb, which the UAE claim belong to it.

It expressed "the concern of member countries toward Iran's stubbornness in pursuing its policy of provocation and fait accompli."

"The council calls on Iran to agree to submit the dispute to the arbitration of the International Court of Justice," it concluded.

In Amman on Friday, the chairman of the U.S. Joint Chiefs of Staff, General John Shalikashvili, warned that Iran was seeking to "destabilise" the region.

PNA seeks help to block Israeli move

By Mervat Suwadeh Special to the Jordan Times

AMMAN — The Palestinian National Authority (PNA) has asked Jordan to mediate with Israel to halt a reported plan by Israeli Prime Minister-elect Benjamin Netanyahu to shut down the PNA representative office in East Jerusalem, Palestinian Ambassador to Jordan Omar Al Khatib said Sunday.

Mr. Khatib said the request was made by Faisal Al Hussein, who is in charge of the Jerusalem portfolio in the PNA, during a meeting with Prime Minister Abdul Karim Kabariti.

"We wanted to update Mr. Kabariti with the latest developments and keep close coordination with Jordan regarding Jerusalem," Mr. Khatib told the Jordan Times.

He stressed that the PNA would seek the intervention of the sponsors of the Middle East peace process if Mr. Netanyahu carried out the reported plan to shut down the PNA office.

"We have agreements with Israel and if the Israelis chose to dishonour these agreements we will have to ask other parties that are involved in the peace process to

intervene," Mr. Khatib said. Mr. Hussein's visit came one day after Jerusalem's Israeli mayor announced that Mr. Netanyahu would shut down the Orient House.

The Orient House officially served as a headquarters for the Palestinian delegation to peace talks with Israel.

Right-wing Israelis have often complained over Palestinian diplomatic activities at the Orient House which they considered an infringement of Israel's "sovereignty" over its "invisible and eternal capital."

After his meeting with Mr. Kabariti, Mr. Hussein told reporters that the PNA was hoping for new level of coordination between the PNA and Arab countries regarding Jerusalem.

"Arab countries should adopt new tactics in order to cope with the new political situation in Israel," Mr. Hussein said in a statement carried by the Jordan News Agency, Petra. "The recent changes require closer coordination between Arab countries."

According to the 1993 Palestinian-Israeli declaration of principles the fate of Jerusalem should be determined in the final status negotiations which began last month in Tabu, Egypt.

Approval rating of government has fallen, opinion poll finds

By a Jordan Times Staff Reporter

AMMAN — The rating of the government of Prime Minister Abdul Karim Kabariti and in terms of performance in the first 100 days in office has fallen to varying degrees from expectations when his government took office in February, an opinion poll has found.

However, the rating of the prime minister himself remained higher than that of the government, the opinion poll, conducted between May 17 and 19,

showed. The opinion poll, carried out by the Centre for Strategic Studies at the University of Jordan, found that among the general public, 32.2 per cent now believe Prime Minister Kabariti had "to a large extent" successfully shouldered the responsibilities of the present stage.

This compares with 45.5 per cent who felt the same way in a similar poll conducted between Feb. 6 and 10. The Kabariti government took office on Feb. 4.

Among public opinion leaders, a different group of

target audience addressed in the polls, the rating went down to 18.9 per cent from 51.7 per cent.

The "general public" included 1,200 respondents over 19 years in age selected at random throughout the Kingdom while "public opinion leaders" involved 678 former and serving members of parliament and former officials, including ministers, and secretaries-general of ministries, former and current political party leaders, public figures, union leaders, businessmen, journalists, writers, artists, professors and

university students, the centre said.

The poll was conducted on samples selected in accordance with standard statistical principles and criteria, the centre said.

Following are the main findings of the survey (figures in brackets indicate the finding of the February poll for comparison purposes):

On the performance of Prime Minister Kabariti:

Among the general public:

— 51.7 per cent

— 37.4 per cent said to "a medium extent" (32 per cent);

— 6.8 per cent to "a limited extent" (11.6 per cent);

— 7.3 per cent said they saw Mr. Kabariti had failed in this task (4.6 per cent).

Among public opinion leaders:

— 37.8 per cent to a "large extent" (45.5 per cent);

— 37.3 per cent to a "medium extent" (34.5 per cent);

— 13.2 per cent to a "limited extent" (5.5 per cent).

— 8.2 per cent said they saw the government incapable of this task (2.7 per cent).

On the government's ability to shoulder responsibilities:

Among the general public:

— 32.2 per cent believe the government is to a large extent capable of shouldering the responsibilities (38 per cent)

— 43 per cent believe the government is capable of shouldering the responsibilities to "medium extent" (43.2 per cent).

— 49.1 per cent believe it is capable to a "medium extent" (46.9 per cent).

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Israel must honour its peace agreements — Indian lawmaker

By a Jordan Times Staff Reporter

AMMAN — Regardless of the change in its political leadership, Israel is duty-bound to honour its agreement with the Palestinians and the international community expects the Jewish state to abide by the relevant U.N. Security Council resolutions, a prominent Indian politician said Sunday.

K.M. Khan, a member of Rajya Sabha (upper house of parliament), also said he agreed with the Jordanian and Egyptian stand that the victory of right-wing leader Benjamin Netanyahu in last week's elections need not necessarily stall the peace process.

In any case, it is "too premature" to form an opinion about Mr. Netanyahu's approach to the peace process, said Mr. Khan, a veteran expert on Arab affairs in the Congress (I) Party of former Prime Minister P.V. Narasimha Rao, noting that the Likud leader had not made any public comments on the issue after winning the elections.

While Mr. Netanyahu's pre-election statements were indeed "disturbing," it should also be remembered that "the promises that a candidate makes while running in elections" could simply remain promises when "he assumes the chair of power," said Mr. Khan, Asian coordinator of the non-governmental Coordination Committee on Palestine.

Furthermore, said Mr. Khan, the Palestinians have signed agreements with "the government of the state of Israel and not a political party or individual" and the "agreements are guaranteed by world powers."

As such, Israel, regardless of the political colours of its leadership, is committed under international law to respect and honour all agreements it has made with external parties, including



K.M. Khan

the Palestinians and others, he said.

As far as India and the rest of the international community are concerned, Israel "is obligated to implement United Nations Security Council resolutions 242, 338 (on Palestine) and 425 (on Lebanon)," said Mr. Khan, who hails from the southern Indian state of Hyderabad.

Mr. Khan summarily rejected the notion that with the signing and implementation of the autonomy agreements between the Palestine Liberation Organisation (PLO) and Israel the concerned Security Council resolutions had become dead letters.

"This is not the position of the United Nations, which believes that these resolutions are very much applicable and Israel is duty-bound to apply them" in the context of the final status negotiations between the Palestinians and the Jewish state, Mr. Khan stressed.

The Indian politician, who is on a private visit to Jordan on his way back from attending a U.N. meeting on Palestine in Cairo, described the role of the U.S. in the Middle East peace process as "not very satisfying," particularly when it comes to the objective of implementing the relevant U.N. resolutions.

"The U.S. is slowly losing its credibility as an honest mediator in the region because of its bias towards Israel," said Mr. Khan. Such bias, he added, "is exceeding the limit of a good relationship between two countries," added the politician, who often serves as spokesman for the 130-million Indian Muslim community.

Mr. Khan, who visited the U.N. camp at Cana, South Lebanon, where more than 102 civilians were killed in an Israeli rocket attack last month, cited as an example Resolution 425 of 1978, "which calls on the Security Council to ensure that Israel withdraws from South Lebanon in 24 hours after the resolution is adopted."

"Eighteen years have passed since the resolution" and Israel continues its occupation of parts of South Lebanon, noted Mr. Khan.

He also said that the U.S., instead of using its influence with Israel and put an immediate end to its blitz on Lebanon last month, took the Israeli side and wasted time before brokering a ceasefire as if to give the Jewish state time to achieve the objectives of its military operations.

Mr. Khan, president of the Indo-Arab Friendship Society, said the Indian government, regardless of the stand of its political leaders, and the people of the sub-continent stand fully behind the Palestinians' quest to set up an independent state.

Such an approach, he asserted, is fully independent and is immune to any influence based on India's relations with other countries.

India, which is an active participant in the multilateral phase of the Middle East peace process, "will continue to play an active role" and seek to contribute to achieving a just and comprehensive peace in the Middle East, added Mr. Khan.

First public spy chief takes over troubled Mossad

TEL AVIV (AFP) — Retired general Danny Yatom, the first head of Israel's Mossad intelligence agency whose name can be published, took office Sunday tasked with healing years of internal strife and finding a new raison d'être for an organisation unused to peace.

Mr. Yatom, 51, was named to a four-year mandate as Mossad chief by outgoing Prime Minister Shimon Peres, whom he had served as military attaché.

Mr. Yatom, who retired from the army on Friday after 33 years of service, replaced Shabtai Shavit, who headed Mossad since 1989 and whose identity became public only last week as the government pursued a policy of easing censorship restrictions concerning the identity of top security officials.

Mr. Shavit, 57, has been

appointed president of a private health insurance company, Kupat Holim Maccabi.

One of the key tasks of the Mossad under Mr. Yatom, a mathematician with degrees in physics and computer technology, will be to battle extremists who remain violently opposed to the peace process between Israel, the Palestinians and other Arab states.

The agency will specifically have to tackle the foreign sources of funding and support for the Islamic Resistance Movement (HAMAS) and Islamic Jihad, the groups responsible for a spate of suicide bombings in Israel which killed 58 people in February and March.

On the occasion of Mr. Yatom's retirement from the army Friday, Mr. Peres praised his "efficient and clean" security analyses and "correct advice."

Mr. Yatom will be one of

the rare outsiders to take over the Mossad and his arrival was being welcomed in the troubled Israeli intelligence community, still reeling from the assassination last year of prime minister Yitzhak Rabin by a Jewish extremist.

Mr. Yatom took control of a spy agency struggling to find its place since the start of the peace process nearly five years ago.

Much of its previous work had been to monitor neighbouring Arab states, a task now handled in large part by the foreign ministry, thanks to the peace process.

The agency has also been hit by internal wrangling and morale problems linked to the departure of several senior officials in recent years that have prompted some to accuse Mr. Shavit of promoting friends to key posts rather than choosing the most qualified people.

Iranian speaker's choice shows conservatives' grip on power

TEHRAN (AFP) — The election of Ali Akbar Nateq-Nuri as a provisional speaker of Iran's new parliament on Sunday confirmed the hard-line religious conservatives' tight grip on power.

A key figure in the Islamic leadership in Iran, Nateq-Nuri, 53, received 132 votes against 105 for the only other candidate for the post, Abdollah Nuri, who was fielded by an uneasy coalition of moderates and left-wingers to challenge the hardliners.

Mr. Nateq-Nuri, who was also the speaker in the last assembly, is the leader of the Association of Militant Clergy, a grouping of conservative Shiite Muslim clergymen with a strong base in the political establishment in Iran.

The moderates close to president Ali Akbar Hashemi Rafsanjani were pitted in a fierce rivalry against the conservatives grouped around parliament leader Ayatollah Ali Khamenei in the legislative elections in March and

April.

The conservatives have called for preserving fundamental Islamic values against Western "cultural invasion" while the moderates favour the easing of strict Islamic regulations and rapprochement with the West.

A total of 241 deputies of the total 249 elected in the polls voted for the interim speaker and his deputies.

The Iranian parliament has 270 seats but the authorities have cancelled votes in 21 districts for alleged irregularities.

By-elections will be held in five months to decide the rest of the seats.

The conservatives also swept all other posts in the presiding board, including that of first and second deputy-speakers, which went to Hassan Ruhani and Mohammad Ali Movahedi-Kermani respectively.

Mr. Ruhani is the secretary of the Supreme National Security Council, the highest political and military decision-making body in the

country.

Ayatollah Movahedi-Kermani, a hardliner, is Ayatollah Khamenei's representative in the elite revolutionary guards.

Mr. Nateq-Nuri will chair the assembly while an interim presiding board proceeds to approve the deputies' credentials. A permanent speaker and a provisional bureau are to be elected after the approvals are issued.

The election of conservatives to the presiding board confirmed speculation that the religious right had swept the recent elections for Iran's fifth parliament since the 1979 Islamic revolution.

In the absence of political parties in Iran and lack of "clear" platforms, both the conservatives and the moderate left-wing coalition had claimed to have gained the majority of seats.

Already assured of 132 votes and hoping to sweep most of the 21 seats left to be decided, the right-wingers will be all but certain to have a comfortable majority in the new assembly.

Prosecution sums up its case in Islamists' trial

By Rana Hussein
Special to the Jordan Times

AMMAN — Prosecutors in the State Security Court trial of seven men known as Bay at Al Imam (pledge of allegiance to the leader), Sunday presented materials as evidence that the accused were plotting to carry out acts of sabotage.

The seven, part of a group of 13 men, are charged with plotting to carry out extremist attacks and illegal possession and manufacturing of explosive materials in the intent of using them illegally.

The remaining six, who are released on bail, are charged with distributing pamphlets that are slanderous to His Majesty King Hussein. On May 19, the 13 defendants pleaded not guilty to all charges.

Prosecutor witness Second Lieutenant Ali Ensour of the Preventive Security, said that all the explosives he examined in July of 1994 were "fit to use."

According to Lt. Ensour, the explosives which the prosecutor charged were found with some of the defendants, were four anti-personal mines, four hand

grenades, 10 triggers, and nine fuses.

"These explosives are approximately three years old and are harmful to human beings if it was used," he told the court.

Sec. Lieut. Usama Youssef of the Biader Wadi Sir Police Station told the court that he searched the home of the third defendant Mustafa Hassan Musa Suleiman, in the Jandawil area.

He told the court that the defendant himself led him to two plastic capsules (filled with acetone and oxygen) that were kept on the roof of his house.

When asked by the defence attorney if Lt. Youssef checked the identity of the third defendant before searching his house and he said no.

"The security officers who brought the third defendant to the police station informed me that it was Mustafa Musa and that my job was to go and search his house," he said.

Presiding Judge Youssef Faouri postponed the case for today (Sunday) to hear the remaining three prosecution witness in the case.

Israeli election outcome alarms Gulf Arab press

DUBAI (AFP) — Gulf Arab newspapers said Sunday they feared the Middle East peace process could crumble following rightist Benjamin Netanyahu's victory as Israel's next prime minister.

Newspapers from Qatar, the United Arab Emirates and Kuwait all expressed concern for the peace process, although those close to the Saudi government said Likud leader Netanyahu had no choice but to respect Israel's previous commitments.

"If Netanyahu steps back from accords that have been concluded, Arab countries will have to take similar measures," the Qatari newspaper Al Watan said.

Qatar's Foreign Minister Sheikh Hamad Ben Jasssem Al Thani warned Saturday that Doha could revise its moves towards normalisation with Israel if Mr. Netanyahu began to question the peace process.

"If Netanyahu throws the peace process into doubt, we will revise our attitude towards our ties and contacts with Israel," said Sheikh Hamad on the eve of a ministerial meeting of the Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC).

Officials said the issue of Mr. Netanyahu's victory was to dominate Sunday's meeting of GCC foreign ministers.

Mr. Netanyahu edged out Mr. Peres by a wafer-thin majority in Wednesday's elections in Israel on a hard-line platform stressing Israel's security needs and ruling out further land concessions to the Palestinians.

Qatar and Oman, the only

Gulf states to begin a rapprochement with Israel, received a visit by outgoing Israeli Prime Minister Shimon Peres in April and are now exchanging trade missions.

The UAE daily Al Bayan said the "big loser in the elections is the peace process," while the Al Fajr daily said "the time has come for Arab leaders to review their positions."

In Kuwait, the independent daily Al Watan described Mr. Peres' defeat as a "catastrophe," saying Mr. Netanyahu would benefit from the same U.S. support as his predecessor, despite his intransigence.

"The United States will soon inform the Arabs that it is necessary to increase concessions to please thieves and murderers," the daily said.

But the Saudi newspaper Al Medina, which reflects the government view, said: "The Likud leader has before him commitments and responsibilities which are different from those which fell on him when he was in the opposition."

"In a few weeks Netanyahu will come back and make peace not the way he wants to but in line with concluded agreements," it said.

Saudi Arabia's Al Yom daily minimised the difference between Likud and Mr. Peres' Labour government, saying the parties "are two sides of the same coin."

"The choice made by Israel since Oslo and Cairo accords (on Palestinian autonomy) is that of peace," it said.

By Rana Sabbagh
Reuters

Jordan's first pork butchery raises eyebrows but does good business

FUHAIS — Despite public abuse and a taboo on eating pork by the vast majority of Jordanians, Assad Bourqan says business is booming in the Kingdom's first licensed pork butchery.

"Business cannot be better," Bourqan told Reuters inside the small shop that he opened in this largely Christian town near Amman in mid-1995.

Previously, pork was available only as frozen imports or as unlicensed sales by a couple of local farms selling directly — and discreetly — to the public.

"Half of my customers are locals; the rest are foreigners, diplomats and ambassadors who have become regular clients."

His butcher is an Iraqi Muslim, who like tens of thousands of his compatriots fled the political and economic turmoil since the 1990-

91 Gulf crisis when Iraq invaded Kuwait.

The butcher refuses to eat pork, in line with Islamic teachings, but says he has no problem cutting the meat and preparing products such as salted bacon and traditional spiced and wine-soaked sausages.

Muslim labourers also work Jordan's two Christian-owned pig farms in Madaba, 40 kilometres southwest of Amman, with whom Bourqan has an exclusive marketing franchise.

Doctors use state laboratories to test samples of saliva, spinal cord and kidney from each slaughtered pig to determine if it is fit for human consumption.

Bourqan sells a tonne of pork a

week at an average of 4.5 dinars (\$7) per kilogramme — rates compatible with local beef.

Drinking Pepsi and smoking cigarettes, Bourqan smiled as he recalled his struggle to get a licence for his "Fresh Pork Meat Market."

The government includes pigs in a long list of permitted animals and rules for slaughtering. But Christians, who had pork in their traditional diet, are under five per cent of Jordan's four million people.

"Nobody wanted to have his signature on the paper allowing me to operate the first fresh pork butchery," said Bourqan, an accountant.

"I had to go back and forth to the various state departments arguing with them for two months until I finally got it after threatening to take them to court because there was nothing in the law banning that."

Jordan's sole English-language newspaper, the Jordan Times, was the only mass-circulation daily in the Kingdom that would print ads announcing the opening of the shop, he said.

Even his family had doubts: "They warned me to expect trouble and they advised me to operate discreetly from a house instead of entering into a confrontation with the people."

"In the first few days of the

operation, my nerves were uptight, I got hundreds of phone calls asking if the ad was a hoax and everytime I left the shop I would find returning out of fear I will find it burnt out or bombed," he said.

"On several occasions, passers-by threw stones at the shop, spat on its window and swore all sorts of insults."

It took time to win over people. Some who were willing to try pork were still suspicious about the standards of the new shop.

"In the beginning, some of them used to take a small portion to try it out," he said. "Now, there is trust and confidence, they even ask us to make home deliveries."

Bourqan, eyeing an expatriate community of more than 36,000 people and the foreigners in Gulf states who import frozen pork, said he is now considering expanding by setting up a factory.

JORDAN TIMES DAILY GUIDE AND CALENDAR

JORDAN TELEVISION

Tel: 773111-19

PROGRAMME TWO

15:00 Bonkers (cartoon)

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De la Salle Church

Tel: 661257

Terra Santa Church Tel: 622546

Church of the Annunciation Tel: 623541

Anglican Church Tel: 652626

Armenian Catholic Church Tel: 711331

Armenian Orthodox Church Tel: 775261

St. Ephraim Church Tel: 771231

Armenian International Church Tel: 625236

Evangelical Lutheran Church Tel: 824328

German-speaking Evangelical Congregation Tel: 845457

The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-Day Saints Tel: 659332

Church of Nazareth Tel: 675691

The Evangelical Local Church in Amman Tel: 811295

English-speaking Latin Catholic Parish Tel: 614190

St. Mary of Nazareth Church Tel: 810740

Assemblies of God Church Tel: 632785

St. Joseph Church Tel: 624590

Latin Catholic Church Tel: 614190

Church of the Association Tel: 637441

St. Mary of Nazareth Church Tel: 810740

Assemblies of God Church Tel: 632785

St. Joseph Church Tel: 624590

Latin Catholic Church Tel: 614190

Church of the Association Tel: 637441

St. Mary of Nazareth Church Tel: 810740

Assemblies of God Church Tel: 632785

St. Joseph Church Tel: 624590

Latin Catholic Church Tel: 614190

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St. Mary of Nazareth Church Tel: 810740

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St. Mary of Nazareth Church Tel: 810740

Assemblies of God Church Tel: 632785

St. Joseph Church Tel: 624590

Latin Catholic Church Tel: 614190

Church of the Association Tel: 637441

USEFUL TELEPHONE NUMBERS

NIGHT DUTY

AMMAN:

Dr. Khalil Abdo 732920

Dr. Jum'ah Abu Dhiab 750848

Dr. Walid Al Mawri 675485

Dr. Youssef Rashid 896301

Ferdous pharmacy 779336

Al Asma pharmacy 637055

Nairookh pharmacy 636772

Al Salam pharmacy 636770

Yacoub pharmacy 648455

Shmeisani pharmacy 637660

Nairookh pharmacy 636772

Najih pharmacy 847632

TRBD:

Dr. Ghazi Tu'annich 251480

Alquds pharmacy (—)

Japan week could significantly advance ties, say organisers

By P.V. Vivekanand
Jordan Times Staff Reporter

AMMAN — The Japan Week in Jordan, which opens on Saturday, is another landmark in Jordanian-Japanese relations and could significantly advance cooperation in all spheres, organisers said Sunday.

Formally announcing details of the event, which is spread over about three weeks although it is titled "Japan Week," the Institute of Diplomacy, the Jordanian organiser, noted that it was the "natural and logical sequel" to the "Jordan Week" held in Tokyo in May last year.

Mazeo Armouti, president of the Institute of Diplomacy, said the June 8-29 Japan Week had three distinct components; the official ceremonies related to visit of Prince and Princess Takamado, fourth in line of succession to the Japanese throne, the "intellectual" component that involves in-depth discussions on Japanese-Jordanian relations and the "cultural and artistic" phase which includes a host of Japanese exhibitions, theatre and music.

The Japan Week is held under the patronage of HRH Crown Prince Hassan and Prince Takamado and sponsored by the specially set-up Jordanian and Japanese national committees for the event.

The Japanese organiser of the event is the Middle East Institute.

Dr. Armouti, addressing a press conference along with Japanese Ambassador Takayuki Kimura, said a symposium on Japanese-Jordanian relations on Saturday entitled "Partnership Towards the 21st Century" would come up with an "Amman statement."

The statement, he said, will expand on a Tokyo

Declaration that was adopted by a similar symposium held in the Japanese capital as part of the Jordan Week there.

"The Tokyo Declaration is the first written document that encompasses all aspects of Jordanian-Japanese relations," noted Dr. Armouti. "The Amman Statement will expand and build on it."

Among the issues to be discussed during the symposium, are "The New Middle East and the Role of Japan and Japan," "Japanese Economic Development and Asia, with relevance to Jordan and the Middle East Region," and "Japan Towards the 21st Century and a Possible Model for Jordan and the Region."

Prince Hassan and Prince Takamado lead the list of participants in the symposium. Others include Wasuke Miyake, president of the Middle East Institute of Japan, former Japanese Justice Minister Kazuo Tanikawa and several Japanese and Jordanian experts on economic development and Japanese-Jordanian relations.

Nearly 700 people are expected to take part in the various activities of the Japan Week.

The June 8 symposium is complemented with in-depth debate at other seminars which will deal with issues such as "The Role of Private Sector in Japan and Jordan," "Japan and Jordan in the International Society," "Possible development of Tourism Industry in Jordan," "Industrial policy," "Prospects for Economic Cooperation between Japan and Jordan," and "Status of Women in Japan and Jordan."

Dr. Armouti and Ambassador Kimura described the Japan Week in Jordan as another achievement in building Jordanian-Japanese relations and noted that the event would expose Jordanians to various aspects of Japanese culture and life while the Japanese participants would be given a close look at Jordan.

"The objective of the Japan week is to further enhance and strengthen Jordanian-Japanese cooperation and consolidate bilateral relations in all spheres," said Dr. Armouti.

Mr. Kimura said no specific agreements or announcements on cooperation were expected to be made at the Japan Week.

"It is an event that would expose the two people to each other's life and culture," he said. "It is an occasion to establish contacts and build on already established contacts. There is time for specific agreements and announcements in the months to come."

Replying to a question, Ambassador Kimura said the "special relationship" between Jordan and Japan and between the royal families of the two countries was the main influencing factor behind the Jordan Week in Japan and the Japan Week in Jordan.

Mr. Armouti also referred to the Tokyo Declaration, in which Japan said it considered Jordan as the gateway to the Middle East.

"The special friendship Japan has with Jordan can serve as a catalyst to further enhance the cordial relations between Japan and the entire Arab nations," says the declaration in this context.

Youth require sense of security to become achievers — Crown Prince

By Francesca Ciriaci
Special to the Jordan Times

AMMAN — HRH Crown Prince Hassan stressed the "vast energy and potential" of today's youth and underlined the role of youth exchanges between the European Union (EU) and Mediterranean third countries as "paramount, if the region is to herald the next millennium with a sense of security and calm."

Pointing at the crucial role that youngsters play in the shaping of cultural, political, and socio-economic identity of any society, the Crown Prince, in a statement read on his behalf by HRH Princess Rahmah Bint Al Hassan, said that "young people will certainly have opinions formed according to their particular environment, but, nevertheless, the periods of personal development that they experience, ... added responsibilities and general personal growth that result in full social integration are all factors common to all nationalities."

"The social problems and pressures that young people face, from peer pressure to drugs, from unemployment to violence, even general anxiety about the future: Will I be able to secure a regular income? Will I be able to provide a healthy environment to raise a family? are also paralleled world wide."

"It is these similarities that make imperative that barriers between peoples of the (Mediterranean) region are dissolved so that young people can benefit from each other's experiences and nurture the feelings of empathy that are needed to ensure a peaceful coexistence," the statement said.

The Crown Prince's statement Sunday opened a 6-day conference on the role of youth exchanges between the EU and the Mediter-

anean partners.

The conference, organised by the Rome-based Università del Mediterraneo (UNIMED), with the support of the Directorate General for Education, Training and Youth of the European Commission and the sponsorship of the Italian Ministry of Social Affairs, in collaboration with the University of Jordan, the Ministry of Tourism and the Ministry of Youth, aims at promoting EU-Mediterranean cooperation programmes in the field of youth and identifying financing possibilities to implement them.

According to Kamel Mahaddin, rapporteur of the conference and director of UNIMED decentralised office in Jordan, "the conference will help evaluate the needs and priorities of Mediterranean universities, and it represents a coherent continuation of a number of initiatives promoted by the EU presidencies in favour of the Euro-Mediterranean dialogue, which culminated with the Barcelona Conference."

Addressing the representatives from the 15 member-countries of the EU, Iceland and Norway, as well as delegates from 13 Arab countries, Cyprus, Israel and Malta, director general of UNIMED Franco Rizzi said last November's Barcelona Conference "provided a framework for future developments in Euro-Mediterranean relations and represented a guideline for future partnerships."

Pointing at the importance of mutual understanding between the northern and southern shore of the Mediterranean, Professor Rizzi called on governmental and non-governmental youth policy-makers to "give young people not only an abstract and exotic idea of the Mediterranean, but the



reality of the Mediterranean whole."

Addressing the opening session on behalf of the Minister of Youth, Secretary General Majid Quteishat said that since "in Jordan, youth under 30 make up two thirds of the total population, we have to work on bridging the gap between them and the community, to understand each other's problems, exchange experiences and translate positive energies into actions."

Minister of Tourism Saleh Irsheidat stressed "the major role that youth, through its travelling, will play in establishing real peace," and said that, "out of the one million visitors Jordan received last year, 60 per cent of them were youngsters."

Accordingly, the Ministry of Tourism will focus its efforts on developing tourism policies to facilitate youth's mobility and meet young visitors' needs, Dr. Irsheidat said.

President of the University of Jordan Fawzi Gharabeh said youth exchange programmes between the EU and the Mediterranean countries should be assisted and promoted. Dr. Gharabeh added that policies aimed at "making youth as an active partner in society" should be implemented.

"Formulation of youth policies should not come from politicians or decision makers, but from the youth themselves," Dr. Gharabeh said.

Talking about the definition and classification of "youth," the Crown Prince's said "an exorbitant pressure lies today on ... those who have survived the teenage period with all the angst entailed therein, and who have not settled into life as the prime movers of society, those who are navigating the treacherous waters of their twenties, college leavers with high hopes and often great qualifications who find suddenly that they are out of the bubble of security that is partially provided by the educational institutions."

"This group, with its vast supply of energies and ideologies ... counting for two-thirds of the population in the region ... represents the blueprint of tomorrow's society."

Taking into consideration Jordan's particular case and recent changes, such as "the demographic upheavals of the Gulf War which resulted in a population growth of 10 per cent in only a few months, the peace treaty with Israel ending two generations of a state of war, and the huge economic reform programme that Jordan is currently in the process of implementing," the Crown Prince said that "those in their late teens up to their early thirties are ... being required to struggle most intensely."

"It is them who, 10 years from now, will be the established policy makers, and their outlooks and attitudes will have been strongly affected by their experiences today," the Crown Prince said.

"They will so to speak 'make or break'."

House speaker heads for talks in Qatar

AMMAN (Petra) — Lower House of Parliament Speaker Saad Hayel Srour Monday will lead a parliamentary delegation on a visit to Qatar at an invitation by Speaker of the Qatari Shura Council Mohammad Ben Mubarak Al Khalifah.

During the three-day visit, Mr. Srour will meet with Qatar's Emir Sheikh Hamad Ben Khalifah Al Thani and will hold talks with senior Qatari officials on Jordanian-Qatari relations, the latest developments in the region and efforts exerted to revive Arab solidarity, with special emphasis on the role of Arab parliaments in this regard.

Mr. Srour will also meet with the Jordanian community in Qatar and will exchange with them views on their conditions in the Gulf emirate.

At the conclusion of the visit, Mr. Srour will hold a press conference outlining the outcome of his talks in Doha and Jordanian-Qatari relations.

In statements prior to his departure, the House speaker said the visit comes as part of the continued consultations among the two brotherly countries and expressed hope that it will contribute to enhancing joint Arab action.

He also praised Qatar's role at the Arab level and paid tribute to the Qatari Shura Council's efforts to mend Arab fences.

Mr. Srour is accompanied on the visit by Assistant House Speaker Mohammad Huneiti and deputies Ibrahim Zeid Kilani and Ali Shatti.

Muslims, Christians to discuss problems of education in modern society

By Ghaila Ahl
Special to the Jordan Times

AMMAN — "The Educational System in Islam and Christianity" will be the topic of this week's Muslim-Christian dialogue, organised by the Royal Academy for Islamic Civilisation Research- AL al Bayt in cooperation with the Orthodox Centre in Chambesy-Switzerland.

The meeting which will be inaugurated today by HRH Crown Prince Hassan, chairman of the Royal Academy, will bring together 50 participants representing the Muslim and Christian communities from all around the world, Hussein Rawashdeh press officer at the academy told the Jordan Times.

He said both Christian and Muslim participants will present different papers on the philosophy of education in Islam and Christianity, problems of education in the modern society as well as features on the educational system.

These papers, he added, will be open for discussion by the other community.

At the end of the three-day meeting the participants will present a summary of the debate and recommendations which Mr. Rawashdeh said their implementation is not obligatory as the Royal Academy is a financially and administratively independent institution.

The meeting will be the 14th Muslim-Christian encounter organised by the Royal Academy, Mr. Rawashdeh said, adding that the last meeting was held in Germany on the concept of peace in both religions in cooperation with the Anglican Church.

"We organise about four meetings a year in cooperation with four churches on different issues of concern to both the Christian and Muslim communities," he said.

The Royal Academy was established in 1981 and has since then organised 14 Muslim-Christian meetings in different countries. It also organises Muslim-Muslim meetings which bring together participants representing different schools of Islam from all around the world, Mr. Rawashdeh said.

Shooting mishaps claim 2 lives

By Rana Hussein
Special to the Jordan Times

AMMAN — Two people were killed accidentally Saturday in two separate shooting incidents in Karak and Madaba, according to Public Security Department (PSD) reports.

In Karak, a 30-year-old pregnant woman from Um Humat town of Karak was shot and killed accidentally by her husband, the PSD reported.

The victim's husband, Mohammad Hujjaj T., told police that he was inspecting his gun when a bullet was fired accidentally, hitting his wife Amal Ahmad Hassan, who was standing beside him.

The report said Ms. Hassan was struck in the neck and died instantly.

In Al Shagiq town in Madaba, a 30-year-old man was killed after being shot accidentally by his younger brother, who was firing live bullets to celebrate a soccer

match result, the reports said.

According to the report, Mohammad Minwer, 16, was celebrating a win by his town's soccer team and started shooting from a gun he was carrying.

"Minwer could not control his gun, and one bullet struck his brother, M.A., in the shoulder," the PSD report said.

In 1995, PSD statistics said 11 people were killed in domestic accidents in the Kingdom. Eight of the 11 incidents, the statistics said, were attributed to the mis-handling of weapons by

individuals.

Two children die in tragic accidents

Also Saturday, PSD reports said that two children were killed in two separate incidents in Nazal suburb.

A 3-year-old child, identified as Anas Mohammad, died shortly after arriving to Al Bashir Hospital after his clothes caught on fire.

Jamil Mohammad, a 5-year-old child also died in hospital after falling in a hot water container in his house, reports said. There were no further details.

IN THE MEMORY OF OUR LATE FATHER HASSAN SHAABAN

Two years have elapsed since the tragic passing of our beloved late father who lived his life in a most heroic and benevolent way any human being could. The noble virtues of courage and giving that he instilled in us are alive and make up a small part of his legacy. He taught us to feel with our hearts and think with our minds.

When a parent dies young, the pleasure of loving is tied permanently to the pain of loss. Love and loss are no longer separate and distinct. Like the branches of a vine, they have grown so intertwined that it is impossible to see one without also seeing the other. One learns that to love is to lose, or at the very least to risk losing, the beloved.

We cannot control the movement of time, nor can we control our own destiny, or the destinies of those we love. But we can take comfort in knowing that our precious father is still living in our hearts and will never really be gone. With our faith in Allah guiding us, we look into space and we see our father walking gracefully in the clouds, outstretching his arms in the lightening, and descending in the rain. We see him smiling in the flowers, then rising and waving his hands in the trees. His vision will constantly be with us.

WE MISS YOU VERY MUCH DADDY!

Amal, Tamir & Tamara Hassan Shaaban
Amman — 3 June 1996

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Aung San Suu Kyi calls for more open Burma

RANGOON (AFP) — Burmese opposition leader Aung San Suu Kyi said Sunday that Burma needed to open up to the outside world, but that any opening should be political as well as economic.

"Everyone must accept the fact that no nation can stay isolated internationally," she told some 4,000 people who braved a heavy rain to gather outside her lakeside home for one of her twice weekly addresses.

Aung San Suu Kyi said Burma's long policy of keeping out foreign influences was no longer valid, and accused the government of courting foreign investors while trying to keep political interference out.

"They have been opening up the country for foreign investors, but when foreign governments show interest in the political situation, they are accused of interference," she said.

The official media has stepped up its attacks on unnamed foreign governments in the past week, accusing them of pulling the strings of Mrs. Suu Kyi and the opposition in a bid to destabilise the country.

The junta's powerful intelligence chief, Khin Nyunt, was quoted in the New Light Of Myanmar as saying Sunday that "stooges" under the influence of foreign masters were "undermining peace, stability and progress."

The junta's attacks on the opposition followed a party Congress last week held by Mrs. Suu Kyi's National League for Democracy, in



Burmese opposition leader and Nobel peace laureate Aung San Suu Kyi addresses about 4,000 crowd at the weekend gathering outside her house in Rangoon Saturday. Ms. Suu Kyi said nearly half of the National League for Democracy members arrested by military government ten days ago have been released but some have been charged and will likely be in jail for a long time (Reuters photo)

which the NLD announced plans to write a new constitution and economic policy.

A total of 262 NLD activists were detained in a sweep ahead of the congress in a bid by the authorities to sink the meeting.

NLD officials said that at least 119 activists had been released already, but have

expressed concern that leading party officials may be kept in order to hit them with heavy prison sentences.

Mrs. Suu Kyi said Sunday that some of the remaining activists had been taken to Rangoon's notorious Insein Prison, where human rights groups say political prison-

ers are kept in dismal conditions.

The official press has reported in the past week on a stream of pro-government mass rallies taking place across the country, which bring together as many as 70,000 people at a time to denounce "destructionists."

Many participants say they are required to attend the meetings, which analysts say have been staged by the junta in a bid to show that the military enjoys broad support across the country.

"They are trying to mislead people abroad with these rallies," Mrs. Suu Kyi told her supporters Sunday.

The opposition leader said people should try to refuse to attend the pro-government rallies, but added that she understood the pressure being exerted on them by the military.

"It is counterproductive to have people do things under duress and force them to attend these mass rallies, because they will just realise even more that they are subject to maltreatment," she said.

The pro-government rallies came on the heels of two massive turnouts in front of Mrs. Suu Kyi's gate of a total of some 15,000 cheering supporters last weekend.

Regular participants at the meetings said the turnout was about as half as big as the previous week, as rain kept many people away.

The meetings have drawn an average of about 2,000 participants in previous months.

Indian premier names new ministers; bickering begins

NEW DELHI (AFP) — Indian Prime Minister H.D. Deve Gowda unveiled his cabinet Sunday, naming an economic reformer as finance minister, but the portfolio allocations sparked the first bickering in his coalition government.

Mr. Deve Gowda, 63, who was sworn in as India's 11th premier Saturday at the head of a five-party coalition government, picked Palaniappan Chidambaram, a Harvard-educated lawyer, for the coveted finance portfolio.

His appointment, widely anticipated by Indian industry, was seen as a clear signal by the new prime minister that he intended to continue the free-market economic reforms denounced by leftist members of his United Front.

Mr. Deve Gowda has vowed to pursue the economic liberalisation begun five years ago by former Prime Minister P.V. Narasimha Rao, whose Congress (I) Party is extending crucial legislative support to the minority government.

The soft-spoken Chidambaram, who shaped Mr. Rao's free-market policies along with then Finance Minister Manmohan Singh, was given the additional charge of law, justice and company affairs.

Inder Kumar Gujral, 77, was named foreign minister, a portfolio he held in India's first coalition government in 1989-90, while the Defence Ministry was given to veteran Socialist Mulayam Singh Yadav.

Mr. Deve Gowda retained the powerful home portfolio that had been a bone of contention among the partners in his coalition, as well as atomic energy and agriculture.

It took the prime minister nearly 14 hours to decide on the portfolios of the 20 members in his two-tier ministry because of the pressures exerted by the five partners in the government.

The portfolio allocations sparked the expected discontent, with a leader of Mr. Deve Gowda's Janata Dal (People's Party) who was not included in the cabinet warning publicly that the minority government would collapse soon.

"There is absolutely no reason to believe that this will be a long-lasting government,"

Biju Pamaik, an MP, told the Asian Age newspaper. "Everyone knows this cabinet has been formed at the mercy of the Congress."

"The Congress can pull the rug out from under its feet," he added.

Newspapers said other Janata Dal MPs who had aspired to ministerial berths were also unhappy over their exclusion, and that Defence Minister Yadav, a former wrestler, had pleaded for the home portfolio.

Mr. Deve Gowda's promise after being sworn-in to continue with Mr. Rao's economic reforms also drew veiled criticism from the country's dominant Communist Party, a key partner in the United Front.

"There will be no mechanical continuation of the economic reforms," said Prakash Karat of the Communist Party of India-Marxist (CPI-M). "There will be a critical evaluation."

"Some elements of the policies may be continued, some will be reviewed," he told AFP. "Some priorities may be changed here and there."

"We are engaged with others in formulating a common agenda for the United Front including its economic policies," Mr. Karat added.

On Saturday, the smaller Communist Party of India, which is expected to join the government, also argued against blindly following free-market policies.

The United Front is an alliance of regional, centrist and leftist parties which during the April-May elections fought against both Hindu nationalists and Mr. Rao's Congress Party.

Deve Gowda, a farmer's son, became the prime minister Saturday, four days after his United Front forced the resignation of the country's first Hindu nationalist government after just 13 days in office.

Political analysts have expressed doubt about whether the United Front can survive a full five years in office.

Mr. Deve Gowda, however, asserted that he would complete his tenure. "Wait and see," he told reporters. "I will prove this government can survive for five years."

Congress wins 3 seats in Kashmir

SRINAGAR, India (AFP)

Three parliamentary seats were claimed Sunday by candidates of former Indian Prime Minister P.V. Narasimha Rao's Congress (I) in Kashmir, in general elections boycotted by most Muslim politicians, officials said.

Ghulam Rasool Kar, president of the party's local chapter, was declared elected from Baramulla district in the Muslim-majority Kashmir Valley, defeating a former Muslim militant, Ghulam Nabi Mir, by some 65,000 votes.

Mr. Kar, though a Muslim, is a diehard opponent of the Muslim separatist drive raging in the strife-hit Himalayan state since 1989, when the last election to federal parliament was held.

Congress' Mangat Ram Sharma, a Hindu, won from the nearby Hindu-majority Jammu district, defeating the pro-Hindu Bharatiya Janata Party (Indian People's Party), election officials here said.

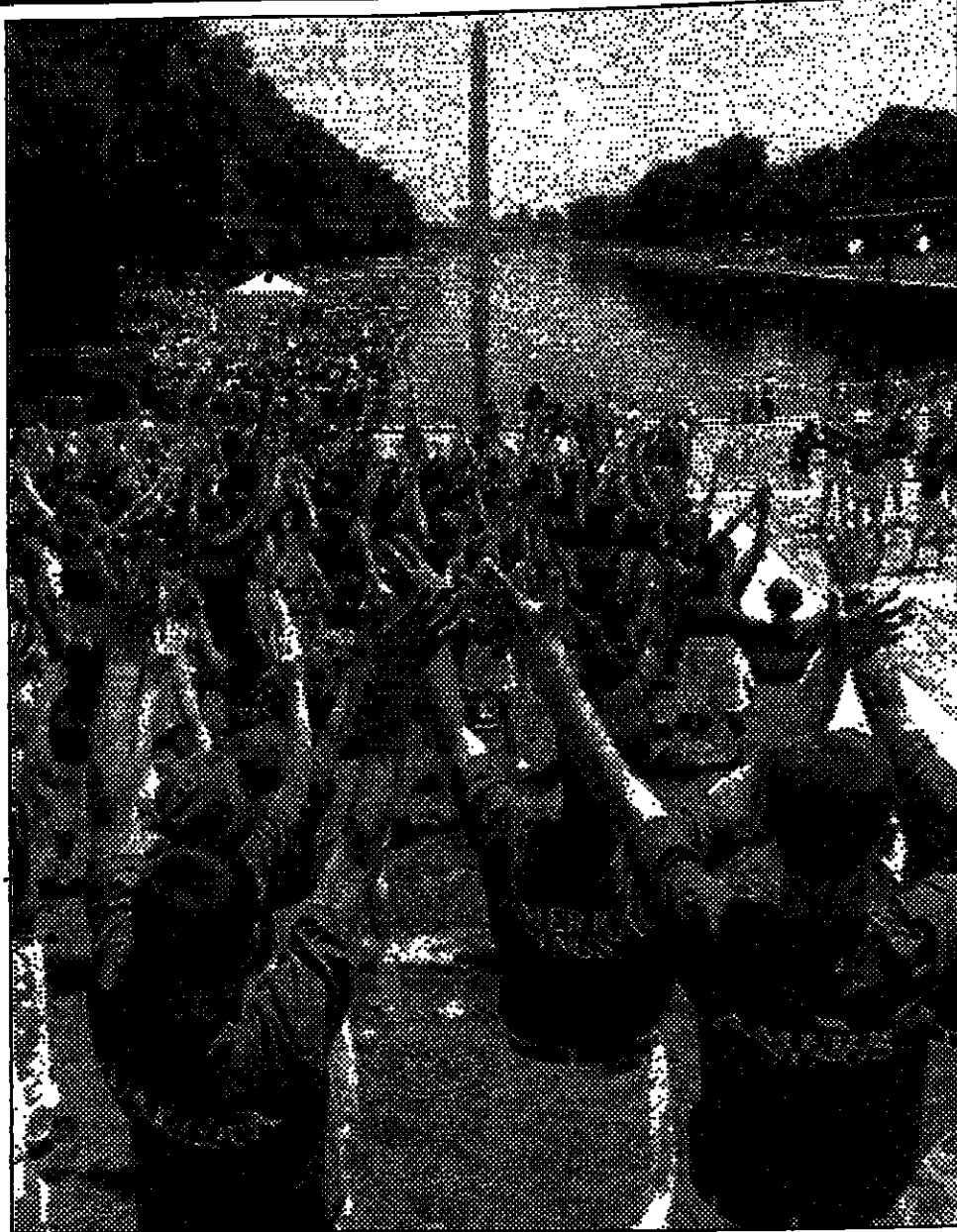
P. Namgial, a Buddhist, defeated a Muslim politician, Qamer Ali Akhoun, in the hill region of Ladakh, where the Buddhist majority threw in their lot with the Congress.

In Srinagar, Kashmir's summer capital, Farooq Ahmad Andrabi of the centrist Janata Dal Party was leading the race, while a Hindu nationalist was ahead of other candidates in the Muslim-majority Anantnag constituency.

Counting of votes in a sixth constituency, Udhampur, began Monday.

The staggered elections in Kashmir in May were boycotted by a majority of the state's Muslim parties, which back a separatist campaign to end Indian rule in the Himalayan province.

Several former militants who are now pro-India joined the fray but were routed in all the constituencies.



Some of the thousands of children who took part in the Stand For Children event perform songs for the crowd in front of the Reflecting Pool and Washington Monument Saturday. Tens of thousands of people took part in the rally which has been enmeshed in a political debate over government programmes and support for children's welfare (Reuters photo)

Thousands rally for children in U.S.

WASHINGTON (R) — Some 200,000 children and adults rallied here Saturday to "stand for children" in an event that combined the flavors of a religious revival meeting and the great U.S. Civil rights demonstrations of decades ago.

Politicians were absent, but the rally was nevertheless enmeshed in election-year political debate as critics accused it of defending a failed big-government welfare system.

President Bill Clinton used it to set the theme for his weekly radio address, meeting seven young participants in the Oval Office and attacking Republican Medicaid proposals "that could amount to child neglect for a whole generation."

Stand For Children was sponsored by 3,000 organisations around the country. Park Police estimated the crowd at 200,000.

In bright spring sunshine, before the lofty columns of the Lincoln Memorial, children, parents, teachers and preachers told stories of triumph over adversity, sickness, drugs and poverty as throngs lined the reflecting pool.

Actors, singers and others appealed for the rights of children, some leading revivalist-style singing and dancing. A mother told of losing health insurance to pay the bills of her ill son. A blind child described his mother's fight to save him. A daughter spoke of her mother's victory over drug

addiction. Although there were no politicians among the speakers, the subtext of many addresses was that the government was not doing enough for poor children.

Marian Wright Edelman, head of the Children's Defence Fund, which organised the rally, told the cheering crowd: "We do not stand here advocating big government. We stand here advocating just government, a government that does not give more to those who have and less to those who have not."

The Rev. Samuel Proctor, Martin Luther King Memorial professor at Rutgers University in New Jersey, said the nation was moving toward "building more jails for our youth rather than enhancing their education, starving innocent infants rather than improving their chances for productive living."

Leading up to the rally, congressional Democrats listed Republicans' "top 10 votes against kids," and Republicans issued a study blaming the burden of excessive government spending for pushing children into poverty.

The conservative Heritage Foundation said the sponsors of the march had a "misguided agenda — defending a welfare system that hurts the very children it is intended to help."

NATO to seal radical deal on future role

BRUSSELS (R) — Drawing on the hard-learned lessons of the West's failure in Bosnia, NATO foreign ministers take steps this week to make the alliance capable of dealing with future post-cold war crises.

The 16 ministers meeting in Berlin will start the process of transforming a defensive military alliance designed to withstand a massive attack from the east into an organisation capable of mounting new missions from crisis management to peacekeeping.

By adapting the alliance's command structures to reflect post-cold war realities and giving Europeans a greater role, the North Atlantic Treaty Organisation (NATO) also confirms itself as the continent's pre-eminent security organisation.

"Five years ago, there was serious talk of everything except a major attack being dealt with by others and NATO slowly withering on the vine. Now, everything is seen as within NATO," said one alliance diplomat.

Underlining NATO's key role in Europe, the ministers will also hold talks with Russian Foreign Minister Yevgeny Primakov, on the fringes of the main meeting, on his country's role in the alliance-led Peace Implementation Force (IFOR) in Bosnia.

NATO hopes the success of the 60,000-strong force policing the Dayton Peace Accords and the unprecedented cooperation with non-NATO countries will become a model for other security missions.

Mr. Primakov is expected again to criticise NATO's plans to expand eastwards — an issue NATO ministers are keen to play down ahead of the Russian presidential elections on June 16.

On Friday, President Boris Yeltsin said in a reelection manifesto that Russia wanted a real partnership with the United States and Western Europe, but this could be hurt by NATO's expansion plans.

"We will once again stress enlargement will be a transparent process, containing no surprises and with no intention of creating new dividing lines in Europe," said another alliance diplomat.

Russia, the United States, France, Britain, and Germany, the big powers who for years tried and failed to broker an end to the Balkan crisis, also meet in Berlin.

Keen to keep the unity that finally brought the worst conflict in Europe since World War II to an end, the contact group countries will speak with one voice over the need to press ahead with elections in Bosnia.

The wars resulting from the break-up of former Yugoslavia have convinced all the NATO allies that attempts to create a European Security and Defence Identity (ESDI) must take place within the trans-Atlantic alliance.

Diplomats said the crisis was finally resolved when the United States and the main European allies, France and Britain, spoke in unison — a lesson quickly absorbed in Paris and London.

Britain always wanted ESDI within NATO, but France previously preferred to see such a development within the Western European Union (WEU), itself possibly merged with the European Union.

Last December that changed. President Jacques Chirac indicated France could rejoin the alliance's military structures it left in 1966 in return for reforms giving Europeans greater visibility.

"WEU as a European pillar within the alliance: Never have we been so united on the aim," added the diplomat.

In Berlin, the ministers will give this accord practical shape by agreeing mechanisms which force the use by European nations of NATO's largely U.S.-owned facilities, satellites and communications equipment, for WEU missions.

Diplomats say the agreement on Combined Joint Task Forces (CJTFs), as they are known in military jargon, sketches over the details and big differences still remain, but say they represent a radical new step for the alliance.

"The agreement on a new concept of more flexible command structures that we are expected to reach in Berlin is a milestone in the history of NATO," alliance Secretary-General Javier Solana said last week.

Chinese police arrest mass murderer

BEIJING (AFP) — Police in China's Yunnan province have arrested a man suspected of committing 25 murders over eight provinces during a nine-month killing spree in 1993, a newspaper reported Sunday. Li Zhiyong, 40, from the southwestern province's Tengchong county, was arrested several days ago in the town of Ruih, close to the Burmese border, the People's Public Security News said. Li allegedly killed 25 people between February and October 1993 as he travelled through the provinces of Yunnan, Sichuan, Shaanxi, Henan, Hunan, Guizhou, Guangdong and Guangxi. According to the newspaper, he murdered victims with an electric truncheon, of the type carried by Chinese police, and robbed them of tens of thousands of yuan.

Sailor rescued in the Atlantic

NEWPORT, Rhode Island (R) — A Massachusetts man sailing alone to England was rescued in the mid Atlantic Saturday after the mast of his 9-metre boat broke off, the U.S. Coast Guard said. David Dietz, of Nantucket, was reported in good condition after he was picked up about 700 miles (1,127 kilometres) southeast of Cape Cod by a freighter bound for Norway, a Coast Guard duty officer in Boston said. Mr. Dietz was headed from Newport to Plymouth, England. Local news media reported he was participating in a cross-Atlantic race, but the Coast Guard said that could not be immediately confirmed.

Diana makes plea for anorexics

LONDON (R) — Princess Diana, entering a row over the use of extremely thin models in fashion magazines, made a plea for help Sunday for those suffering from eating disorders such as anorexia and bulimia. In an article in the Sunday Express Princess Diana, who admitted on television last year she had suffered from bulimia for years, pleaded for more awareness and understanding of the problem. Princess Diana, who is held up by magazines as a fashion icon, said parents and carers had to give children the strength to resist the pressures of modern society. "Every step we take to help destroy that blind quest for 'perfection' is so important," she wrote. Princess Diana's comments come just days after a row erupted over the use of emaciated-looking models in the fashion magazine Vogue. The row began when Swiss watchmaker Omega cancelled advertising in a protest over anorexia nervosa. "I thought it was irresponsible for a leading magazine which should be setting an example to select models of anorexic proportions," Omega Director Giles Rees said Thursday. But Alexandra Shulman, editor of the London edition of the magazine, defended its choice of models, saying: "They tend to be in their late teens and still, naturally, extremely thin. As the fashion bible we are acutely concerned about the dangers of appearing to promote unnaturally slim models." Omega backtracked 24 hours later and announced it would continue advertising in Vogue but said it urged the magazine to consider addressing the issues. Research has linked the trend for ultra-thin models with a rise in disorders like anorexia. Many women, and men, are said to feel inadequate when comparing themselves to the models. Princess Diana, who is locked in acrimonious divorce talks with Prince Charles, the heir to Britain's throne, said in Sunday's article that eating disorders often seemed to have their roots in childhood insecurities.

4 injured as Italian volcano erupts

STROMBOLI, Italy (R) — The volcano on the small southern Italian island of Stromboli erupted late Saturday night, starting a fire and slightly injuring four tourists.

Officials said the situation was under control and that there was no immediate danger to the population of the island just north of Sicily.

The eruption occurred near the central crater just before midnight (2200 GMT). A loud explosion was heard and lava and stones burst out.

"This is a normal process for Stromboli and right now there is no talk of evacuation," a Civil Protection Department official in Rome said.

Slow lava flows are a regular part of the volcano's activity, attracting tourists from around the world.

The eruption started a fire on the mountainside as the lava flowed downhill to the sea. The fire was later brought under control and officials said inhabited areas were not

in danger.

Four German tourists who were trekking on the mountain suffered light burns and were treated at a first aid station.

The Civil Protection Department in Rome said a volcano expert was travelling to the island Sunday morning to assess the situation.

Fireboats from Sicily were also dispatched to the island in the southern Tyrrhenian Sea in case they would be needed.

Standoff at Chechen rebel stronghold threatens truce

OUTSIDE SHALI, Russia (AFP) — A tense standoff between Chechen rebels and Russian forces surrounding this town continued Sunday, threatening the fragile truce agreed last week between President Boris Yeltsin and rebel leaders.

Meanwhile, the head of the OSCE mission in Chechnya, Tim Guldin, was due to meet the chief of staff of the Chechen rebel forces, Aslan Maskhadov, in a bid to jumpstart the already faltering process, ITAR-TASS news agency reported.

They were to discuss the peace talks cancelled Saturday in the Dagestan capital Makhachkala, and those planned for Tuesday in the Ingush capital Nazran, which the Chechen side has not yet agreed to attend.

The Russians had blamed the cancellation of the Saturday talks on the Chechen separatists' "excessive demands that the safety of their delegation be ensured," ITAR-TASS said.

But the fragile peace seemed most at risk Sunday at Shali. Russian troops were allowing no access to the town, and only women and children, on foot, were being allowed out.

Women walking through the cordon said the situation in the besieged town, 35 kilometres southeast of the capital Grozny, was calm.

Federal troops sealed off Shali Friday because rebel leader Zelimkhan Yandarbiyev addressed a rally there on his return from Moscow. Interfax News Agency cited the premier of the pro-Russian Chechen govern-

ment, Nikolai Kochman, as saying. Rebels inside the town were given until 0400 GMT Saturday to surrender their weapons, after three Russian soldiers and a local rebel commander were killed in a clash Friday.

Mr. Yandarbiyev addressed the rally on his return from last Monday's Moscow ceasefire talks with Mr. Yeltsin.

Mr. Kochman told Interfax he had had a "serious discussion" with Russian commanders Saturday as to how Mr. Yandarbiyev had been allowed into the town to address what Mr. Kochman termed a "propaganda meeting."

Mr. Yandarbiyev had used the rally to call for "illegal action, the elimination of the (pro-Russian) Chechen government and the boycott of the legislative elections on June 16," Mr. Kochman said.

A rebel spokesman, Movladi Udugov, Saturday threatened renewed fighting throughout Chechnya if Russia went ahead with organising the proposed elections in the breakaway republic.

The rebel stronghold, where he addressed a rally of 3,000 supporters, had been the major stop on Mr. Yandarbiyev's journey back from Moscow Friday.

After landing from Moscow in Slepysovsk Airport in neighbouring Ingushetia, the rebel leader and his delegation made brief stops to address smaller meetings in several villages as they made their way to Shali.

The crowds, several of over 1,000 people, waved separatist flags and portraits of the former President Dzhokhar Dudayev, killed in a Russian air raid, and top guerrilla Commander Shamil Basayev.

After addressing the Shali meeting, Mr. Yandarbiyev left for a village in southern Chechnya.

The ceasefire, which came into force midnight Friday, was observed everywhere Saturday except for a clash in the Nozhai-Yurt region in the south-east of the country.

There were no reports of any ceasefire breaches across the tiny Muslim republic early Sunday as Russian army negotiators resumed talks with rebels on freeing 26 Russian troops captured by the separatists in Nozhai-Yurt.

Earlier, a spokesman for the separatists had proposed exchanging the 26 Russians for 10 Chechens captured by federal troops in Shali.

In Grozny, three Russian soldiers were killed Sunday when their tank set off a mine, the spokesman for the pro-Moscow Interior Ministry Ygor Pogosskov said.

Russian forces immediately blocked off the area and refused to allow journalists access.

Interfax also said two Russian construction workers taken hostage by Chechen rebels in December were freed Sunday. A total of 17 remain captive.

Chechnya violence hangs over Russia campaign

MOSCOW (R) — Two weeks before Russia's presidential election, opinion polls put President Boris Yeltsin ahead of his Communist rival but fresh violence in Chechnya Sunday threatened to upset his campaign.

A ceasefire negotiated by Mr. Yeltsin with Chechen separatist leader Zelimkhan Yandarbiyev aimed at boosting his reelection chances was to have come into force at midnight Friday.

But the deaths of four Russian soldiers Sunday in a blast that damaged their armoured vehicle in the Chechen capital Grozny climaxed clashes that threw the truce into doubt.

The Kremlin hailed Mr. Yeltsin's Chechnya initiative last week, in which he also made a lightning visit to the rebel region, as a tour de force illustrating his resolve to end the almost 18-month-old conflict.

But his presidential opponents, chiefly Communist candidate Gennady Zyuganov, dismissed it as a cynical election ploy of little real substance, and continuing violence up to June 16 election day would provide his rival with ammunition.

An opinion poll by the Cessi Institute published by the Moscow Times newspaper and CNN television network showed the Kremlin chief keeping his lead over Mr. Zyuganov, a 51-year-old former maths teacher.

It gave Mr. Yeltsin 32.6 per cent of the vote to 19.7 per cent for Mr. Zyuganov and said none of the other

nine candidates would get more than six per cent. It also suggested Mr. Yeltsin would coast to victory against Mr. Zyuganov in a second-round runoff in July.

The two men have broadcast competing philosophies as they have crisscrossed the vast Russian Federation.

Mr. Yeltsin, 65, Russia's first elected president and once a junior member of the ruling Soviet politburo, bills his campaign as a crusade to stop the return of Communists to the Kremlin and a new era of repression.

Mr. Zyuganov, less charismatic than Mr. Yeltsin and a dull public speaker, has nonetheless exploited widespread resentment among millions at poverty and hardship caused by the chaotic transition to a market economy promoted by Mr. Yeltsin.

He seems likely to hammer away at the same message when he sets off Monday for a four-day trip to western and central Siberia, his last full campaign tour before election day.

Mr. Yeltsin, assured of heavy coverage on pro-government television and demonstrating a renewed vigour belying two bouts of heart trouble last year, plans to continue touring up to a final appearance in his home town of Yekaterinburg on June 14.

All opinion polls say neither of the two men will gather the 50 per cent of votes needed to win the first round outright and it will go to a second-round, head-to-head clash in July.

But pollsters acknowledge that their

methods of sounding out the voting intentions of Russia's 105 million electorate are unreliable and there could be surprises in store.

Support for flamboyant ultra-nationalist leader Vladimir Zhirinovskiy, widely seen by many pollsters as likely to win third place, is notoriously hard to read in opinion polls and he often snaps up a gut "protest" vote at the last minute.

Where his votes and those of other candidates would go after the first round could be vital for the ultimate outcome.

Mr. Yeltsin, who has rolled out a sweeping programme for action if he is re-elected, will seek to consolidate his image as a peacemaker when he meets the leaders of the Transcaucasian states — Armenia, Azerbaijan and Georgia — and Russia's north Caucasus regions Monday.

Leaders of these and the other members of the Commonwealth of Independent States (CIS) have already given public backing for Mr. Yeltsin's campaign for a second term.

But the "Caucasian summit" in the south Russian spa town of Kislovodsk risks being overshadowed by events in Chechnya.

With each side blaming the other for clashes in the region at the weekend, talks between Russian officials and Chechen commanders on practicalities of enforcing the truce were postponed from Saturday.

33 dead, 13 injured in Mexico train-bus collision

MAZATLAN, Mexico (R) — Thirty-three people died and 13 were injured, most of them seriously, when a passenger train slammed into a crowded bus carrying mostly university students in northern Mexico, officials said Saturday.

The train collided with the bus at a train crossing Friday night on the outskirts of Mazatlan, a Pacific coastal city about 600 kilometres northwest of Mexico City, officials said.

A four-year-old boy was the only bus passenger not injured in the accident, a Mazatlan state official said. None of the passengers on the train

was hurt. "It was horrible. We have at least 33 dead and some very seriously injured people," Emma Ibarra, a Red Cross official in Mazatlan, told Reuters in a telephone interview.

The bus driver, unaware of the train, drove the bus across the tracks without looking and did not hear the warning cries of his passengers in time to avoid the fast-moving train, Ms. Ibarra said.

"Apparently he had music on very loud and the bus was so filled with people that he did not see the train. People cried out to warn him, but he did not hear them in time," she said.

Luis Zuniga Vizcarra, assistant Sinaloa state attorney general in Mazatlan, told state-owned news agency Notimex that the passenger train was heading to the northern city of Nogales from the western city of Guadalajara when it hit the bus, dragging it about 300 metres before coming to a halt.

He said the young boy apparently escaped injuries because he was thrown into a nearby cornfield.

The injured were taken to several hospitals in the city centre of Mazatlan, Ms. Ibarra said.

Nastase votes in Bucharest race

BUCHAREST (R) — Romanian former tennis star Ilie Nastase, looking as fresh as a 49-year-old can after a night at the disco, voted Sunday in local elections he expects to make him mayor of Bucharest.

Flanked by his campaign team Nastase stopped off for a heart-starting coffee outside a burger bar near his home in a suburb favoured in the past by the Communist-era ruling elite.

"We went out for a while and visited a few discos. I think I deserve it after three months," Mr. Nastase told Reuters of his pre-election tour of Bucharest nightspots.

Across town opposition Democratic Convention (CDR) candidate Victor Ciorbea, a 41-year-old trade union boss who cuts a more sombre figure than long-haired Nastase, arrived at a voting station with CDR presidential candidate Emil Constantinescu.

"These local elections are an important first step before the national and presidential elections to bring about the general change necessary for Romania," said Mr. Constantinescu.

Bucharest is currently held by a liberal mayor.

The local elections, for municipal councils across Romania, are seen as an important barometer of support for the ruling

Party of Social Democracy (PDSR) before parliamentary and presidential elections due in late September or October.

The PDSR, headed by President Ion Iliescu, emerged from the old Communist Party and has effectively governed since the 1989 revolution which toppled dictator Nicolae Ceausescu.

Standing in Bucharest for the PDSR, Mr. Nastase represents what Romanians refer to as "the power", a coalition of powerful entrenched political and business interests. He says it is a recipe for action, rivals see it as a recipe for cynicism.

The PDSR, never as popular in Bucharest as in the peasant villages and Communist-era industrial towns, has found in the 1976 French Open winner a national hero which has helped moderate its image as a party dominated by old Communists.

"We proved that we have the youngest candidates, people who are brilliant, people who are coming from different areas and Ilie is only one of these," PDSR Executive President Adrian Nastase, no relation, said in a recent interview.

While the ruling party polls 20 per cent support, Ilie Nastase has polled as high as 47 per cent, showing his personal pulling power to overcome the stigma of the party.

1st Caucasus summit to boost Yeltsin's poll prospects

MOSCOW (AFP) — President Boris Yeltsin chairs a Caucasus summit Monday that will give him a new opportunity to portray himself as a powerful regional leader ahead of the Russian presidential elections later this month.

The first such summit to be held since the break-up of the Soviet Union five years ago will bring together the heads of both the independent states of the region and the republics still under Russian control.

They include Eduard Shevardnadze of Georgia, Armenia's Levon Ter-Petrossian and Azerbaijan's Gaidar Aliyev — still locked in conflict over the enclave of Nagorno-Karabakh — and the head of the pro-Russian government of Chechnya, Doku Zavgayev.

The conference, at Kislovodsk in southern Russia, is to climax with the signing of a "declaration of inter-ethnic understanding, of peace, cultural and technical cooperation in the Caucasus."

And it may well include, like the May 17 summit of the Commonwealth of Independent States in Moscow, a ringing endorsement by the participants of Mr. Yeltsin for the June 16 elections, according to ITAR-TASS news agency.

The declaration to be signed will probably not go beyond vague expressions of goodwill given the numerous unresolved conflicts in the region.

Armenia in particular, claiming sovereignty over the Armenian-populated enclave in Azerbaijan, would rather avoid statements reaffirming territorial integrity.

Russia, Azerbaijan and Georgia, for their part, do not want to see right of self-determination acknowledged when they are fighting respectively against Chechen, Armenian, and Abkhaz and Ossetian separatism.

As a consequence, "we'll just stick to general principles and avoid controversies," said a Georgian diplomat, while noting "that for the first time for several years we'll be talking about peace in the region."

Australian premier leads stand on tougher gun laws

SYDNEY (R) — Australian Prime Minister John Howard Sunday led the country's politicians in vowing to introduce tough gun laws after the second shooting spree in just over a month, shrugging off huge anti-gun control rallies.

"I understand how strongly some people feel about this issue and I've always acknowledged there are a lot of law-abiding people who are going to be affected by these new laws," Mr. Howard told reporters in Sydney.

"I also know that the great majority of the Australian people support the stand that I have taken... and whilst I understand the views of people who dissent, the government's position will not alter," Mr. Howard said.

Some 60,000 gun owners staged one of the country's biggest protests since the Vietnam War Saturday, just hours after a gunman armed with a pump-action shotgun wounded five people near the tropical city of Darwin, capital of the northern territory.

A 23-year-old man was being questioned Sunday in a Darwin hospital after being shot in the arm by police and hit with a stun grenade.

Mr. Howard plans to ban automatic and semi-automatic weapons like the ones used in the April 28 shooting massacre of 35 people in Port Arthur, Tasmania, and Saturday's shooting in the town of Palmerston, 20 kilometres south of Darwin.

Pro-gun control rallies in Sydney and Melbourne Sunday saw calls for politicians to stand firm on their commitment to stricter gun laws, despite the huge rallies.

"We have to stand on this issue and we will stand firm," federal Liberal parliamentarian Joe Hockey told the gun-control rally in Sydney.

"I am confident that the overwhelming community supports tougher uniform national gun laws," Mr. Hockey said. Opinion polls show 95 per cent of Australians favour tighter gun control.

The Northern Territory's Chief Minister Shane Stone said the latest shooting reinforced the need for uniform national gun laws as the gunman who ran amok Saturday had only recently arrived in Palmerston from Tasmania.

"What it does demonstrate is that whilst the territory has maintained a very stringent and high standard of firearm legislation, other states have let us down to the point where firearms have been far too accessible..." Mr. Stone said.

Australian gun laws are a state responsibility and vary dramatically, with no national register of firearms.

In the wake of the Port Arthur massacre, Tasmania has banned automatic and semi-automatic weapons.

Australia's most populous state New South Wales has already banned the sale of automatic and semi-automatic weapons and has introduced new legislation to return gun control to the national government.

Mr. Howard said that tougher gun control laws would not guarantee an end to further shootings.

"That would be ridiculous (to assert). What the laws would do is minimise the danger to the widespread possession of weapons," Mr. Howard said.

Mr. Howard said Australian politicians had the opportunity to stop the country adopting the gun culture of the United States.

"Its (United States') politicians are intimidated out of doing anything. I am determined that will not happen in this country and that is why I've taken the stand that I have," Mr. Howard said.

Dole hits Clinton's honesty, integrity

WASHINGTON (R) — Republican presidential candidate Bob Dole Sunday launched his sharpest attack so far on President Bill Clinton's character, saying the American people deserved 100 per cent honesty from their president.

In a speech to Republican state chairmen, Sen. Dole never uttered the word "Whitewater" and said he did not want to make Mr. Clinton's character an issue.

But he left little doubt he was referring to this week's convictions of three former Mr. Clinton associates in Arkansas on fraud charges linked to the Whitewater affair, a tangled financial controversy that began with a failed investment in a land deal.

"I want to be president because I want to return integrity to our government — a mission that's more important this week than even a week ago," said Sen. Dole.

The Dole campaign has instructed aides not to refer directly to Whitewater and let the affair speak for itself. But Sen. Dole clearly wanted to seize on some of the issues raised by the case, in which Mr. Clinton testified by videotape for the defendants.

His speech throughout was dotted with words like "trust," "honesty," "integrity," and "truth."

"I've said that this campaign is about telling the truth," Sen. Dole declared. "Telling the truth about Bill Clinton's record is a full time job."

"Every time Bill Clinton says one thing and does another — every time he talks like a conservative but governs like a liberal — he puts his character and credibility on the table," Sen. Dole said.

He added: "The American people deserve nothing less than 100 per cent honesty from their president."

Sen. Dole said Mr. Clinton invited voters to ask whether he could be



Republican presidential candidate Bob Dole greets Mother Teresa at the Gift Of Peace Convent in Washington D.C. Saturday. Mother Teresa is in town to visit the new convent (Reuters photo)

trusted by saying one thing and doing another on many key issues. "And the harsh light of public scrutiny will not be kind," said Sen. Dole.

Later Saturday, the Clinton campaign released a statement saying Sen. Dole's speech was "not surprising."

"With no positive agenda or vision for where to move our country, we can expect to see a lot more of these desperate and negative personal attacks on the president," it said.

At the party's convention in August Sen. Dole will formally receive the Republican nomination to challenge Mr. Clinton in the Nov. 5 election. Recent polls indicate he is trailing the

president by around 15 percentage points.

But Sen. Dole said his decision two weeks ago to resign from the Senate had energised Republicans and he felt the gap narrowing.

"Traveling across America, I can feel the tide turning. It's turning out there. Believe me, it's turning," he said.

Sen. Dole has been spending about four days a week campaigning. Last week, he was in California, Illinois and Ohio. Next week, he will visit Michigan and Virginia.

He has also started speaking from prepared texts — a pattern he followed Saturday — with the result that his speeches have become more focused.

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No cause for sit-in

TENSION BETWEEN the government and the Jordan Press Association (JPA) mounted yesterday after the Minister of Information, Marwan Muasher, refused to withdraw a draft law governing the work of the association in a meeting the two sides held yesterday.

The association, whose restricted membership rose to a meagre 360 yesterday even after 24 journalists were sworn in as members before Dr. Muasher, has been at loggerheads with the ministry over the draft law on which the association says it has not been consulted.

The meeting between members of the association's executive board and Dr. Muasher resulted in the board calling for a sit-in in front of the Prime Ministry on Tuesday to protest the new draft legislation.

In yesterday's meeting, the minister sounded genuinely conciliatory when he told the president of the association and his delegation that it was impossible to withdraw the law since it is now being discussed by the Cabinet but offered instead to meet jointly with the Lower House's Judiciary Committee to discuss any amendments the association might want to introduce to the draft law. But the delegation decided to reject the minister's proposal having taken it to the board later in the day.

A number of journalists are also considering signing a petition that would express the association members' rejection of the new law but it is not clear yet how many would sign it because of a clear division within the journalistic community over the nature of the amendments and their impact.

A major objection that the leadership of the association has against the draft law is an amendment concerning the definition of a journalist and a new criteria for eligibility for membership. Those opposed to the draft legislation charge the new definition would leave the door wide open for non-journalists to join the association whose membership has thus far been strictly controlled, leaving many established journalists outside the association.

But the main point of contention is a proposed amendment which would no longer make membership in the association obligatory for practising journalists. The JPA is opposed to this change on the grounds that in the new situation the association would be unable to regulate the profession.

But despite the campaign that the board is leading against the draft law, we believe that the new legislation is far superior to what the JPA leadership is proposing in terms of promise and outlook as well as respect for the freedom of association which journalists should be among the first to recognise and advocate.

One can understand the JPA's fears that making membership a matter of choice for journalists could weaken its claim on the representation of journalists. Forced membership in unions and associations, however, constitutes a denial of the basic right for individuals to choose the groups with which they want to be involved. Instead of demanding that journalists be legally obliged to join its ranks, the association can work to attract journalists to join it by convincing them that it can best serve their interests. If journalists are convinced that their association is working to promote their causes, enhance their freedoms and improve their working conditions, they will inevitably want to be part of it. This is where the JPA needs to work hard, very hard, and to prove that its strength emanates from its role in serving the cause of journalists and journalists and not from some protectionist measures stipulated in the law.

ARABIC PRESS COMMENTARIES

THE FALL of Israeli Prime Minister Shimon Peres and the rise of Likud leader Benjamin Netanyahu to the reins of power in Israel sent shock waves in the peace camp. Al Ra'i Arabic daily said in its editorial Sunday. It said the Likud Party's platform and statements by its leaders, including the elected Prime Minister Netanyahu, had brought about pessimism among the region's people, regarding the future of the region. This state of pessimism, it continued, expanded to include those proponents of the peace process who were hopeful before the election of the Likud leader as prime minister. In this light, we are witnessing intensive moves by parties involved in the peace process to contain the effects of the Israeli elections and to bring the process back on track, the newspaper said. It highlighted His Majesty King Hussein's telephone call with Mr. Netanyahu in this regard, stressing Jordan's interest in peace among peoples. King Hussein, it said, reiterated the need to continue the process in an interview with Cable News Network (CNN), reminding that the decision to make peace was irreversible.

Labour, Likud — never two sides of the same coin

By Michael Jansen

BOTH ARABS and Westerners who contend that the Likud and Labour parties are "two sides of the same coin" and that it does not make any difference who won the Israeli election are deluding themselves.

The pessimists, including the 80,000 Israelis of Palestinian origin (the so-called "Arab Israelis" who, reportedly, brought about Labour's defeat by casting blank ballots in the prime ministerial vote, argue that by starving the Palestinians in the self-rule areas and bombing Lebanon former Israeli Prime Minister Shimon Peres demonstrated that he was no better than the hardline Likud leader Benjamin Netanyahu.

The pessimists seem to stick to the maxim — a Zionist is a Zionist is a Zionist. But this proves nothing except the fact that such pessimists are ignorant about Zionism. Because there are many types — and flavours — of Zionism. Labour Zionism was the dominant force in the first 30 years of the state.

It is true that Labour's Shimon Peres, from the Palestinian point of view, was a great disappointment. A man projected by the media as the Israeli "godfather" of the peace process, he failed to secure the implementation of the Oslo accords. His government did not release Palestinian prisoners, open the land corridor between Gaza and Jericho, depart from Hebron or achieve progress on the "final status" issues of Jerusalem, refugees, borders, resources and so forth. And he imposed the punitive closures on the West Bank and Gaza causing Palestinian great distress and suffering.

The problem with Peres is that he was, like his predecessor Yitzhak Rabin, an old-fashioned, unconstructed Zionist. A man basically committed to the "Land" captured by Israel, to its settlement and incorporation in the "Jewish state." For Peres, and Rabin, the idea that this "Land" should be ceded to the Palestinians was, funda-

mentally, unacceptable. And, although, committed in their minds to making peace with the Palestinians on the basis of the "land for peace" formula, neither Peres nor Rabin were psychologically capable of divesting themselves — Israel — of the territories captured in the war of 1967, a war they personally waged.

During a visit to Cyprus soon after the initialing of the Jordan-Israel treaty in 1994, Peres stated firmly that Israel would not withdraw from the West Bank in accordance with Resolution 242: "We have withdrawn from 90 per cent of the territories occupied in 1967". And he said that Israeli settlers would stay — a point he made all too clear during the election campaign. The problem between Palestinians and Israeli settlers, he said, was one "between people" who must learn to live together. This was a totally false and insensitive reading of the situation.

But then Peres is an old Zionist, a founding-father of the state. He could not be expected to take a liberal or generous attitude towards the old enemies of Zionism. Peres is, however, a Labour Zionist, a secularist, a man of the modern Western world and susceptible to its humanist influences. In spite of the closures and the Cana massacre, a man of reason. Furthermore, Peres, the septuagenarian founding-father, is on his way out. And his successors — men like Yossi Beilin and Haim Ramon and Avraham Burg — belong to a new generation of Labour Zionists who have accepted the necessity of making compromises on the "Land of Israel", of granting the Palestinians a share of this land, an inalienable share, to be sure, but at least the West Bank and Gaza — and probably even East Jerusalem. Such men are the politicians of the future in the Labour Party. They are Israel-born, pragmatic Israeli nationalists rather than Zionists. And over the past decade they, and their coalition partners in the Meretz Party, have grown up and matured. These "new" Labourites are pre-

pared to accept Palestinian self-determination and independence in a state, the division of Jerusalem and a total evacuation of the Syrian Golan (and southern Lebanon). They are the forces of light and peace in the Jewish state, men prepared to accept a "Lesser Israel", an Israel minus most of the land acquired by conquest in 1967.

Likud Zionism is a different story. Arab and Western optimists who claim they can deal with the Likud, that that party can be persuaded to exchange land for peace and to carry on with the peace process could not be more wrong.

The optimists' argument that the Likud handed the Sinai back to Egypt so it has shown itself to be interested in peace is false. For the Likud only returned the Sinai to Egypt because that was the only way to remove Egypt, the only serious Arab military power, from the front of Arab confrontation states. Furthermore, this peacemaking cost the Likud nothing on the ideological level because its philosophers never claimed Sinai as a part of "Eretz Israel". Those who argue that peace can be made with the Likud because it is only the other face of the Labour coin have not done their homework.

Its roots are in the Jabotinsky movement, also superficially secular, but with a strong undertone of manic messianism and a drive towards territorial aggrandisement (the east bank of the Jordan being one of the parcels of land claimed). For the Likud, the West Bank is "Judea and Samaria", the heartland of the ancient Jewish kingdoms, the sacred territory of the Jewish religious texts. Not "one inch" can, for the Likud, be alienated by handing it back to the Palestinians. Benjamin Netanyahu glibly states that his government is prepared to grant the Palestinians "full autonomy" but asserts, at the same time, that Israeli troops will not implement further redeployment from Palestinian territory — indeed the Israeli army may return to the Palestinian

self-rule areas in order to take action against "terrorists". The "full autonomy" Netanyahu is prepared to offer is the Palestinians' right to collect their own garbage and clean the streets in their towns and villages — rights former Likud prime ministers Menachem Begin and Yitzhak Shamir were prepared to grant to the Palestinians.

Netanyahu is not a member of the generation of the founding fathers of the Jewish state. Yitzhak Shamir, who left power in 1992, was the last of these Likud politicians. Born in Israel, Benjamin ("Bibi") Netanyahu is of the same generation as Labour's secular, pragmatic liberals. But he did not enjoy their liberal Labour Zionist upbringing. Netanyahu is the son of a Jabotinsky professor so far to the right that he found it too hot to live in Israel. So he migrated to the United States where he could freely express his extremist ideas. And the son imbued freely of the father's ideology. Furthermore, in the Likud "Bibi" is surrounded by party elders who continue to cling to the Likud's "Greater Israel" policies. Among these hardline politicians are Ariel Sharon, Ehud Olmert, Rafael Eitan — men mid-way between the founding fathers and the younger generation of politicians. Men of darkness and conflict who are prepared to fight in order to defend the territories Israel now holds.

And to make matters worse, the Likud's commitment to "Greater Israel" has been bolstered by the success in the election of the party's prospective coalition partners from the religious right, totally committed by their religious belief of "Greater Israel".

Thus, pessimists and optimists (and pessimists) who claim that Labour and Likud are two sides of the same coin, could not be more wrong. And Arabs and Westerners who think the Likud will adopt or even adapt Labour's peacemaking policies should be warned about making such a foolish assumption.

Human Rights File

Israel's swing to the right spells danger

By Waleed M. Sa'di

The shock waves from Israel's Wednesday elections have yet to be measured and assessed. Yet there is no doubt in the minds of many who know best and are privy to the Israeli political pulse that the Netanyahu victory and the formation of a Likud-led government, comprising like-minded ultra-religious and extremist parties, spells a disaster for Israel itself and the countries of the region as a whole. Prime Minister Shimon Peres of the region as a whole. Prime Minister Shimon Peres had sounded the alarm on the eve of the elections when he said that a Likud triumph would be a catastrophe for all, pure and simple. Who can outguess or outsmart Peres on what a dramatic swing to the right in Israel would mean to the political landscape of the entire region?

Peres' foretelling of doom and gloom and premonition of the catastrophe that lies ahead now that his opponent, Likud leader Benjamin Netanyahu, is projected to form the next Israeli government at this critical juncture in the peace process cannot be explained based on political rivalries and the struggle for power only. I think Mr. Peres' fears go beyond party politics and are well founded.

The outrage that Leah Rabin, the widow of the slain Israeli leader Yitzhak Rabin, felt when she first heard of the results of the voting that put Netanyahu ahead of Peres and the right wing and ultra-religious parties ahead of the moderate and centre left parties was so quick and sharp that she expressed a desire to pack up her suitcases and leave the country altogether.

Israeli Minister of Housing Benjamin Eliazar's depiction of the rise to power of the Likud and their partners as an earthquake was equally poignant and to the point. If such eminent Israeli people see an extremely hazardous road ahead of all of us, in the wake of Wednesday's elections, who are we to doubt them or question their judgement?

In my opinion, the predictions and premonitions of Mr. Peres, Mrs. Rabin and Mr. Eliazar are dead right. I believe that Netanyahu and his partners in power were telling the truth, the whole truth and nothing but the truth, when they said that they will not allow Israel to withdraw from the Golan Heights. I also believe when they say East Jerusalem is not negotiable. I, of course, do not doubt for a minute that their promise to embark once again on a new and bolder settlement construction programme right in the heart of what is left of the West Bank will come true.

We might as well add the city of Hebron to the list of no nos as far as Netanyahu and his ultra-religious partners are concerned. For the Israeli right, Hebron is the holiest of the holy places and cannot be abandoned.

As for the third and final stage of negotiation between Israel and the Palestinian side, they are the most remote possibilities because the Likud is on record as against the Oslo agreements, even though Netanyahu has belatedly professed a formal respect for whatever his country signed with the Palestinian National Authority (PNA). There is no doubt whatsoever where Likud really stands on the Palestinian track when it comes to substance and we may expect drawn-out and protracted negotiations with the Palestinians till there will be nothing left to negotiate for.

Now who are the beneficiaries of the rise to power by Israeli right-wing? On the Arab side, only Arab extremism stands to gain. After all, Palestinian extremists within Fatah and Jihad factions did the impossible to shake up the Israelis and bring them down to their knees in support of Israeli extremism when they carried out a series of bomb attacks on Israeli buses last February.

Palestinian moderation under the leadership of Yasser Arafat is in extreme jeopardy now and I would not be surprised if the Palestinian leader and his supporters would come out as the first losers.

This projected development on the Palestinian level would clearly spell an effective end to the search for a negotiated settlement over the remaining unfinished business between Israel and the PNA. Maybe that was exactly what Palestinian extremism has been working for all along, and it seems to have succeeded.

Besides, if the Labour-led government was in no way near satisfying the Palestinian yearnings of vital issues affecting their future, there is absolutely no reason to expect a Likud-led government to be more forthcoming on Palestinian statehood and sovereignty, even on a truncated piece of the West Bank and Gaza Strip.

As for East Jerusalem, it is a foregone conclusion that the Likud doctrinaire posture regarding the city is not about to be changed, especially when ultra-religious parties are the Likud natural partners in governing the country. If anything, the Likud stance will become harder than ever.

The same goes for Syria. Likud is quite firm and clear minded on the Golan Heights and, most emphatically, Netanyahu meant what he said when he said that an Israeli withdrawal from Syrian territory is out of question. Translated into real terms at the negotiating table, the Syrian track is projected to collapse even faster than the Palestinian one. In other words, the quest for a comprehensive peace becomes a mirage for all intents and purposes.

Jordan does not appear to be affected too much right at this time. What worries me is the future. I do not doubt for a minute that Likud's original stance on Jordan remains the same, notwithstanding all the recent protestations and assurances from Netanyahu to the contrary. The Likud has strategic and doctrinaire designs on the West Bank and views it as an integral part of Israel. Netanyahu may for tactical reasons offer guarantees that the immediate objectives of his party have no longer any designs on Jordan, but the essence of his party's stance remains the same and that is to empty the West Bank as much as possible of its inhabitants on the long haul and transfer them to Jordan.

Netanyahu may try to sugar coat his intentions by attempting to make us believe that his country bodes good and solid feelings for Jordan, but he cannot fool us for long. We need not wait till former Israeli General Ariel Sharon joins the government to realise the long-term plans of the Likud.

But that is not all, as far as Jordan is concerned. I doubt that Jordan would find it viable or even feasible to continue its normalisation process with Israel on the basis of the peace treaty with it as long as there is no regional and comprehensive peace. If the Jordanian people have yet to catch the spirit of warmer relations with the Jewish state even under the most favourable conditions, we can imagine what their sentiments would be if the Syrian, Lebanese and Palestinian tracks were blocked as they are projected to be now.

What should concern us as well is the impact of all these developments on the business climate between Jordan and Israel. Other Arab states would find it difficult to explain the continuation of their policy of establishing contacts and relationships with Israel if comprehensive peace remains remote. No wonder then, Peres, Leah Rabin and other Israelis sensed a great deal of danger when Netanyahu came to power.

I therefore share the widespread conviction that the peace process has been dealt a death blow and that the region is in for turmoil and instability. The full trauma of the Israeli political earthquake can therefore be projected to remain with us for much longer than we have counted for.

India's politics become even more complex

By Raju Gopalakrishnan
Reuters

NEW DELHI — Politics in India, the world's biggest and most ram-buncious democracy, have always been complex.

But at the end of a month of tumultuous alignments, realignments and the third prime minister in as many weeks, India's political landscape has been transformed, perhaps permanently, into an even more intricate pattern, politicians and analysts said.

The divided parliament which emerged from April/May general elections and the ability of a centre-left 13-party alliance to take power after forging rare common ground points to an era of coalition politics which could last decades, the analysts said.

Prime Minister H.D. Deve Gowda said after being sworn in Saturday that the mandate in the polls was for a multi-party government. "No (single) political party would be able to form a government...It is the era of coalitions," he said.

Analyst B.G. Verghese of the Independent Centre for Policy Research said he does not see any single party winning a majority in parliament for at least 20 years.

"India's diversity has always been large, but the bulk was hidden," he said. "Now its underclass is emerging, maturing politically...It will take time before these groups coalesce."

Since independence in 1947, India has been ruled for all but four years by the Congress Party of Jawaharlal Nehru, his daughter Indira Gandhi and her son Rajiv Gandhi. In 11 general elections, only the Congress has ever returned more than 200 members to the 545-seat Lok Sabha, the house of the people.

The centrist party, seen as the driving force behind the fight to gain independence, has generally won support across the regional, religious and caste lines dividing the country, which has 26 states, half-a-dozen faiths and 16 mainstream languages.

Regional parties with more specific appeal emerged occasionally but usually in state elections.

No other political party has quite managed to gain a broad national following and it is unlikely any, including the Congress, will in the near future, analysts said.

"Chunks of the party have been going to smaller regional groups, politics is diffusing down

from the centre to the states and there is a push towards specialised constituencies," said analyst Pran Chopra.

In the 1996 elections, the Congress won only 136 seats, its worst-ever showing, and it was pushed to second place for the first time. The Hindu Nationalist Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) won 160 and formed a short-lived government which resigned on May 28 in the face of defeat in a parliamentary confidence vote.

Even the BJP's unabashed appeal to Hindus, who make up some 82 per cent of the country's 930 million people, is unlikely to translate into a broad following, analysts said.

"The undermass is not naturally aligned to the BJP," said Mr. Verghese. He said the orthodox Hindu philosophies propagated by the BJP struck no chord with the vast majority of lower-class Hindus, for whom issues like poverty and the provision of drinking water transcended religious appeal.

The new united front government, on the other hand, could make rapid progress on some crucial issues, Mr. Verghese said.

"If the government feels it might be short-lived, it

might add to a sense of urgency," he said. "There will be greater willingness to solve problems because of the greater urgency."

The government, a grouping of communists, socialists, pro-farmer regional groups and free-trade advocates, has set rural development atop its agenda. It has also said foreign and economic policies would follow those of the Congress government.

But Mani Shankar Aiyar, a former Congress MP who was defeated in this year's polls, said national issues would always hold sway in general elections.

"To my bitter cost I learned that providing drinking water to my constituency was not enough. The fundamental dialectic is between fundamentalist and secular parties. The 1996 elections are the first engagement in the battle for the soul of India."

He said the divided mandate still points to an anti-BJP vote and that future elections would be played out between the Hindu Nationalist Party on one side and its opponents on the other.

Prince Hassan reaffirms foundation of policy vis-a-vis refugees

AMMAN (J.T.) — Jordan's policy vis-a-vis Palestinian refugees is based on ruling out any action that would have a negative impact on the rights of the refugees, His Royal Highness Crown Prince Hassan said Sunday.

While the Kingdom encourages human interaction between the refugees and the rest of the population, it rejects any move to settle the refugees and integrate them because that would eliminate hopes that the refugees would be able to exercise their rights, the Crown Prince said.

The Crown Prince, quoted by the Jordan News Agency, Petra, also noted that Jordan was one of the major contributors to Palestinian refugees, allo-

cating about \$300 million every year.

The Crown Prince was addressing a gathering at the Hittin refugee camp outside Amman after opening two schools there. The gathering was attended by elders from the camp and educational officers from the United Nations Relief and Work Agency (UNRWA).

The Crown Prince also stressed the importance of investing in developing human resources who could contribute positively to stability.

He said the educational sector should follow the supply and demand concept. "We should not simply talk about technical and vocational education without linking them to labour force and unemployment," he said.

"At a time when we are nearing the end of a phase in educational development, we are looking forward to a new era of development that takes into consideration all inter-related issues," he said.

The ceremony was also attended by Minister of Education Munther Al Mari, U.S. Ambassador Wesley Egan and senior UNRWA officials.

Following the ceremony, the Crown Prince toured the camp and listened to demands from its residents.

Also on Sunday, Prince Hassan opened a technical and vocational exhibition organised by the vocational schools of the Ministry of Education to mark Jordan's golden jubilee of independence.



His Royal Highness Crown Prince Hassan speaks to students after formally opening a school in the Hittin refugee camp on Sunday (photo by Boghos)

Nurses plan strike to press demands

By Rana Hussein
Special to the Jordan Times

AMMAN — Around 2,200 government nurses are planning to stage a two-hour strike Wednesday in all health government institutions during regular working hours in demands for a pay raise.

Jordanian Nursing Association (JNA) President Hashem Salameh said the association was determined to carry on with their strike "despite promises from the concerned officials."

According to Mr. Salameh, a JNA committee met on Sunday with Health Minister Aref Bataineh, who expressed concerns about the nurses' demands and said he was exerting efforts to solve the problems.

"We appreciate the minister's efforts, but we want action and a written and official promise from the Cabinet that all our demands will be met," Mr. Salameh told the Jordan Times.

The JNA's demands include a 90 per cent raise, instead of the present 50 per cent raise, and inclusion

in an incentives allowance system.

"We decided to start a strike after sensing that the concerned authorities were not responding to our demands," Mr. Salameh said.

He said that the strike period will increase exponentially until all their demands are met.

Nurses will not offer any medical assistance between 9 a.m. and 11 a.m. Wednesday except in emergency cases. The strike will resume on Sunday and nurses will abstain from working for four hours.

On June 12, nurses will strike all day if the government does not respond to their demands.

A similar strike was staged last month by more than 2,800 government physicians in the Kingdom, to press their demands and for equal rights as their private sector counterparts. The strike ended the same evening when the government of Prime Minister Abdul Karim Kabariti immediately intervened, promising to study their demands.

Trilateral summit as scheduled — King

(Continued from page 1)

in Jordan from Syria. "The peace process is alive and it will continue," the King told the two journalists, including an AFP correspondent. "We should not judge on the basis of election slogans (...) to suggest that it is the end of the peace process."

In his run-up to the May 29 general elections, in which he beat Mr. Peres by a whisker, Mr. Netanyahu declared that the issue of Jerusalem was non-negotiable.

He also vowed to shut down the Orient House, the Palestine Liberation Organisation (PLO), base in East Jerusalem, encourage new Jewish settlements in the West Bank, and refuse to exchange the Golan Heights for peace with Syria.

But the Palestinians "have no reasons for concern," King Hussein said, adding that he was sure "that Netanyahu will be a fine prime minister in his contribution toward a comprehensive peace."

King Hussein stressed "he was not surprised" by the victory of Netanyahu, whom he had met at least twice since 1994. "Let us give the man a chance to shoulder his responsibilities and there is no reason for scepticism," he said.

"I was among the first he contacted (after his victory) and I wished him all the best. He assured me that he is committed to peace and I told him that he has my full support and cooperation to bring about this peace."

The monarch described the Jordanian-Israeli 1994 peace treaty as "irreversible," and he was optimistic over their future ties.

"I hope our relations will grow stronger and will be an example of peace between two countries and two peoples," he said.

In reply to a question on the electoral programme of Mr. Netanyahu's Likud Party which gave priority to security issues over peace, King Hussein said, "I assume that any government will try to make sure in the negotiations to ensure maximum security

for its people. But it has also to realise that peace is necessary."

The King said he was "disappointed" by the outcome of the anti-terrorism summit which grouped in March some 30 heads of state at the Egyptian resort of Sharm Al Sheikh.

"Unfortunately not much has been done. It should not have been (merely) a photo opportunity," he said.

King Hussein said "what was needed is that any government that harbours terror should not be tolerated, in the hope that we get serious constant attempts to fight terrorism."

"We have to send a clear message to them because what is the point of meeting and issuing communiques. We have to say enough is enough," added the King, who did not rule out imposing sanctions on countries supporting terrorism.

"All measures must be taken against terror which aims at destroying peace" in the region, he said. Asked about reports of the detention of dozens of infiltrators from Syria seeking to carry out terrorist attacks in Jordan, King Hussein said, "had it not been for the vigilance of our people and those responsible for the defence of the Jordanians, we might have had serious tragedies."

"Those attempts started after the ratification of the peace treaty with Israel. It has not stopped and we are still subject to people coming across the border bringing in explosives aimed at carrying out attempts against Jordanians and their guests (Israeli tourists) and to use Jordan as a base for operations" in Israel.

The Egyptian government daily Al Ahras said Syrian President Hafez Al Assad is expected to meet Mr. Mubarak in Cairo within the next two days to plan a larger Arab summit.

"The Egyptian-Syrian summit due to be held in Cairo in the next 48 hours will examine the development of events in the Arab World" as well discuss the

possibility of "a wider Arab summit aimed at Arab reconciliation," said the paper.

"The summit will also look at developments of the situation in the Middle East in the light of the result of the Israeli elections," the paper added.

Cairo's push comes at "a time when coordination is required for a position supporting the peace process and ensuring that it is a balanced and just process," Egyptian Foreign Minister Amr Musa told journalists Sunday.

The new situation in Israel "makes it absolutely necessary that we enlarge the Arab meetings at the highest level," Deputy Foreign Minister Badr Hammam said.

Peres

(Continued from page 1)

reached and in coordination with security arrangements — in other words, about mid-June," the statement said.

Mr. Netanyahu, who won a narrow victory over Mr. Peres in Wednesday's election, is widely expected to form a coalition government by then.

Hebron is the last city in the West Bank from which Israel has yet to redeploy. Under its deal with the PLO, some Israeli soldiers will remain to protect some 400 Jewish settlers who live in heavily guarded compounds among 120,000 Palestinians.

Former Israeli Defence Minister Moshe Arens, who is close to Mr. Netanyahu, said the issue of Hebron would be "one of the top items" on the new government's agenda.

"There's no reason to try to tell you now what they're going to decide," he told Reuters.

Before the communique was released, Nabil Shaath, a minister in the Palestinian cabinet, said the PLO government had a responsibility to carry out the redeployment.

"Failure to do so will really be a dark spot against them," Dr. Shaath said.

Netanyahu appeals for Israeli unity and peace

(Continued from page 1)

his views are... he (Netanyahu) will be... formulating his views as he goes along and until we see what they are, we can't develop any change in our policy. It would be premature," Mr. Christopher said in an interview with news agency reporters.

Earlier, he told CBS television's Face the Nation: "I think we'll have to adapt our policy to the current situation."

So far there has been no change in U.S. Mideast policy, he said.

"But I would want to keep on the situation of adapting our policy to the situation as it develops, as this new (Israeli) administration forms its government and begins to develop its own policies," he added.

A senior U.S. official stressed afterward, however, that the U.S. willingness to alter its policy on the issue of a comprehensive Mideast peace — to which Mr. Christopher has devoted the better part of four years — may be quite limited.

"We're willing to work with the new Israeli administration but we have positions on these issues (pertaining to the peace process) and will stick with them," said the official, who spoke on condition of anonymity.

"We're talking about tactical adjustments on our part," he said.

Mr. Netanyahu's victory has shaken the Clinton administration and particularly Mr. Christopher and top aides who had visions of bringing a comprehensive peace to the Middle East this year with an Israeli-Syrian agreement.

Mr. Christopher and other officials insist publicly they will not "rush to judgment" on Mr. Netanyahu and have urged dispirited Arab leaders to do likewise.

The U.S. secretary of state said Mr. Netanyahu assured him in a telephone conversation Sunday he would continue the peace process.

"He assured me that he wanted to continue to pursue the peace process," Mr. Christopher told news agency reporters.

Mr. Christopher, in Geneva for meeting with Balkan leaders, said he telephoned Mr. Netanyahu to congratulate him on his election victory.

Mr. Christopher also promised to share with Mr. Netanyahu, who is due to come to Washington for a visit soon, all the background U.S. officials have on the Arab-Israeli peace negotiations.

"I was reassured that he wants to sit down with us and go over the background. We'll have, when he comes to Washington, a full and candid discussion with him," he added.

Mr. Netanyahu had raised concerns among Palestinians and other supporters of Arab-Israeli peace efforts by saying before the election that he would refuse to meet Palestinian leader Yasser Arafat, with whom Mr. Peres and his predecessor Yitzhak Rabin had concluded landmark peace deals.

But Mr. Christopher made much of the fact that a top aide to Mr. Netanyahu has talked with a top Arafat aide since the Israeli elections and said: "I think it's significant that the new government has developed a policy of direct contacts with the PLO (Palestine Liberation Organisation)."

"So communication is going on there. The pace of it, the way it's done of course, is up to them," he said.

Mr. Netanyahu meanwhile kept his cards close to his chest Sunday as negotiations began to form a governing coalition around his right-wing Likud Party.

Mr. Netanyahu named Avigdor "Ivet" Lieberman, general secretary of Likud, to head up the bargaining with prospective coalition partners expected to focus above all on ultra-orthodox and other religious parties who won an unprecedented number of parliamentary seats in Wednesday's elections.

But nothing filtered out of the contacts, which also included talks with the new party of Russian-speaking immigrants, Israel B'Aliya,

which was created by former refusenik Natan Sharansky and won seven seats in the Knesset.

To obtain a majority of at least 61 seats in the new 120-member parliament, the Knesset, Mr. Netanyahu must obtain the support of at least 29 deputies other than those elected on the nationalist list presented by Likud.

Officials said initial negotiations focused above all on three religious parties — the ultra-orthodox Shas, which became the third largest formation in the Knesset behind Likud and Labour with 10 deputies, the right-wing National Religious Party (NRP — nine seats) and the ultra-orthodox United Torah Judaism (four seats).

Leaders of the three religious parties, which emerged big election winners with an unprecedented 23 seats, were due to meet Sunday night to coordinate their demands for ministerial portfolios.

The new power of the fundamentalist groups and declarations by some religious leaders that they will try to impose strict observance of Talmudic law have worried many secular Israelis.

An NRP member said his party intended to demand the closure of thousands of shops and restaurants which remain open on the Jewish sabbath, while one ultra-orthodox politician focused his ire on Jerusalem's non-kosher McDonald's restaurant.

Victory challenged

Three Israeli lawyers on Sunday called on the supreme court to annul Mr. Netanyahu's election victory, insisting he failed to score an outright win and that another round of polling was needed.

The lawyers claimed in their suit that if blank ballot papers had been counted separately, instead of being considered void, Mr. Netanyahu would not have passed the mandatory 50 per cent threshold to become Israeli prime minister.

They said voters leaving ballot papers blank are making a political statement and that their votes should be considered as votes cast.

Rome meeting calls for EU-Mediterranean links in data communications

AMMAN (J.T.) — A two-day conference on "Euro-Mediterranean cooperation in the field of information" which ended in Rome on Friday has called for promoting the interconnection and development of communications and trans-Mediterranean information networks as a means to enhance economic cooperation.

The conference, entitled "The Creation of the Information Society in the Mediterranean Countries," recommended maintaining a constant and open dialogue between the European Union (EU) and the Mediterranean countries on the regulatory framework for telecommunications, underlining the importance of standardisation which it described as an important element in ensuring the inter-operability of terrestrial and satellite telecommunications networks.

It said in its recommendations, made available to the Jordan Times, that the EU-Mediterranean dialogue will be supported by concrete cooperation initiatives which will include the promotion of human resources development through appropriate training initiatives. The conference also stressed the need to having harmonised regulatory framework to offer plans for the introduction of free market principles in the EU and the Mediterranean telecommunication sector in

order to promote investments. It advised countries participating in the conference to encourage investment in this sector to improve the quality of services, reduce costs and widen the range of supplies.

The conference also called for putting research and technological development at the service of social and economic development.

It also proposed promoting the constitution of a high capacity Euro-Mediterranean data transmission backbone using submarine cable infrastructures and existing or future satellites.

"The World Wide Web (WWW), reinforced by a satellite infrastructure, would provide the perfect common tool for the development of 'thematic communities' and for the realisation of 'pilot projects' identified by the follow-up committee for the research issue of the Barcelona dialogue," the conference's concluding statement said.

The conference also recommended putting new technologies at the service of the development of human resources and encourage, through training actions, the establishment of the information society.

Jordan was represented at the conference, organised by the Italian government and the European Commission, by Minister of Post and Communications Jamal Sarraf.

Approval rating of government has fallen, opinion poll finds

Continued from page 1

— 14 per cent believe the government is capable of shouldering responsibilities to a "limited extent" (4.7 per cent).

— 14.6 per cent said the government was incapable of shouldering the stage's responsibilities (4.2 per cent). On the success of the Council of Ministers as a team in carrying out its duties:

Among the general public: — 19.8 per cent view the team as capable to a large extent (32.2 per cent)

— 34.9 per cent as successful to a medium extent (37.2 per cent)

— 12 per cent as successful to a limited extent (7.2 per cent).

— 9.9 per cent as unsuccessful (4.6 per cent).

— 23.2 per cent said they did not have any opinion (18.8).

Among public opinion leaders: — Nine per cent see the team as successful to a large extent (21.7 per cent)

— 45.1 per cent as successful to medium extent (43.5 per cent)

— 24.5 per cent as successful to minimum extent (19 per cent)

— 14.7 per cent as unsuccessful (13 per cent)

— 6.3 per cent said they did not have any opinion (2.4 per cent).

Other findings, made from

replies to questions based on the performance of the government since it took office, included:

Among the general public 57.7 per cent said they believed the government had started to develop and revive the economy while 8.6 per cent said they did not know and 33.8 per cent said they did not believe the government had moved in this direction.

In the same category, 31 per cent believe the government has started to control and tackle the problem of unemployment while 61.5 believe the government has not started addressing the problem.

On poverty, 66.1 per cent believe the government has not started to control and address poverty while 28 said they believe it has.

On foreign policy, 78.7 per cent said the government has moved in to develop the policies while 12.3 per cent said they believed it has not.

On administrative reform and fighting corruption, 54.4 per cent said the government has launched moves in this context while 34.9 per cent said they believed it has not.

On democracy and public freedoms, 64.2 per cent said they saw the government launching moves to enhance democracy and protect public freedom, while 27.3 per cent said that it has not.

Other views derived from the poll included:

— 55.3 per cent believe the government will succeed in developing the national economy while 30.8 per cent believe it will not.

— 54.4 per cent believe the government will not succeed in tackling unemployment while 33.2 per cent believe it will.

— 59.3 per cent believe the government will not be able to control and tackle poverty while 30.8 per cent believe it will.

— 72.4 per cent believe the government will develop the performance of Jordan's foreign policy while 15.9 per cent believe it will not.

— 46.3 per cent believe the government will succeed in its administrative reforms and fighting corruption while 40 believe it will not.

— 58.3 per cent believe the government will succeed in enhancing democracy and pro-

tecting public freedoms while 29.8 believe it will not. On the same questions, the views of public opinion leaders were:

— 48.9 per cent believe the government has not started to develop and revive national economy while 46.7 believe it has.

— 74.7 per cent believe the government has not started to control unemployment while 21 per cent believe it has.

— 71.8 per cent believe the government has not started to control poverty while 23.7 per cent believe it has.

— 71.8 per cent believe the government has started to develop the performance of the foreign policy while 23.6 per cent believe it has not.

— 51.1 per cent believe the government has started administrative reforms and fighting corruption while 44 per cent believe it has not.

— 65.2 per cent believe the government has started to enhance democracy and protect public freedoms, 30.3 per cent believe it has not.

— 43.4 per cent believe the government will not succeed in developing the national econ-

omy while 40.9 believe it will.

— 61.4 per cent believe the government will not succeed in controlling unemployment while 26.1 per cent believe it will.

— 63.6 per cent believe the government will not be able to control poverty while 25.9 per cent believe it will be.

— 61.7 per cent believe the government will develop foreign policy performance while 24.7 per cent believe it will not.

— 53.3 per cent believe the government will not succeed in administrative reforms and fighting corruption while 36.5 believe it will.

— 53.9 per cent believe the government will succeed in enhancing democracy and protecting public freedoms while 35.2 believe it will not.

A further split-up of the target audience's replies to various queries raised in the poll showed that:

— 27.8 per cent of businessmen believe the government was to a large extent capable of shouldering the responsibilities of the stage while 35.6 per cent of them said it was capable of doing so to "medium extent."

— 54 per cent of university

students said the government was capable to a medium extent while 20 per cent said to a large extent.

— 41.9 per cent of the political party leaderships said the government was capable to a medium extent while 8.1 per cent said to a large extent.

— 48.5 per cent of professionals said the government was capable to a medium extent while 23.7 of them said to a large extent.

— 45.5 per cent of writers, journalists and artists said the government was capable to a medium extent while 18.2 per cent said to a large extent.

— 53.1 per cent of association and union leaders said the government was capable to a large extent while 24 per cent said to a large extent.

— 47.7 per cent of senior politicians said the government was capable to a medium extent while 16.9 per cent said to a large extent.

— 66.2 per cent of university professors said the government was capable to a medium extent while 7.8 per cent said to a large extent.

— 46.7 per cent of the busi-

nessmen believe the prime minister was successful to a large extent while 31.1 per cent believe to a medium extent.

— 37 per cent of university students believe he was successful to medium extent while 33 per cent of them believe he was to a large extent.

— 41.9 per cent of political party leaderships believe he was successful to a medium extent while 21.6 per cent said to a large extent.

— 46.4 per cent of professionals believe he was successful to a large extent while 30.9 per cent said to a medium extent.

— 36.4 per cent of writers, journalists, artists believe he was successful to a large extent while 35.2 said to a medium extent.

— 41.7 per cent of union leaders believe he was successful to a large extent while an equal percentage also said he was successful to a medium extent.

— 41.5 per cent of senior politicians believe he was successful to a large extent while 36.9 said to a medium extent.

— 45.5 of university professors said he was successful to a medium extent while 32.5 per cent said he was so to a large extent.

Arab Gulf states fail to agree on single tariff

RIYADH (AFP) — Arab Gulf states seeking to merge their economies again failed Saturday to agree on unification of their customs tariffs on foreign imports.

The foreign affairs and finance ministers from the six-nation Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC), ending a brief meeting in Riyadh, said they had decided to resume talks on the common tariff in September.

"The meeting covered finding a common ground for unification of the customs tariffs on foreign imports. We will discuss this groundwork at another meeting in September," Omani minister of state for foreign affairs, Yusuf bin Alawi bin Abdullah, told reporters.

"The problem is that there is a disparity in the existing tariffs in member states. But we hope we will reach a single tariff before the next GCC summit," he added.

GCC states — Saudi Arabia, Bahrain, Kuwait, Oman, Qatar and the United Arab Emirates (UAE) — have been haggling on customs

unification for more than five years as part of plans to create a common market.

The market was stipulated in their 1982 economic pact, which also includes linking their stock exchanges.

The customs unification plan was blocked by the big gap in their tariffs, with such members as Saudi Arabia and Bahrain imposing tariffs of more than 20 per cent on some products and the UAE levying duties of below four per cent.

Customs unification has also been demanded by the European Union as a pre-requisite for their proposed free trade agreement.

GCC officials said this year they had made headway in plans to reach a standard tariff as most of the imported products had been classified. Around 200 of the 1,300 foreign products remained to be included in the list, which covers items to be either taxed or exempted.

Customs unification in the GCC could give birth to the biggest consumer market in the region, with imports of more than \$50 billion a year.

World tourism grows; East Asia seen the winner

HONG KONG (R) — Global tourism is growing fast despite recent economic downturns, and emerging travel markets will erode the leading market share enjoyed by Europe and the Americas, a tourism expert has said.

"Looking at the future, the rate of growth will continue," World Tourism Organisation Secretary-General Antonio Savignac told Reuters.

"The travel industry is probably one of the fastest growing economic activities worldwide," he said. "It is now more important than the export of cars. It is more important than electronic goods."

"We are talking about a doubling in less than 15 years. We are talking about more than one billion international arrivals by the year 2010," said Mr. Savignac.

"We had 540 million last year...There are very few activities in the world you can point to today that would have this substantial growth," he added.

The biggest winners in the growth would be East Asia and the Pacific region, Mr.

Savignac said.

"Although tourism today remains relatively concentrated geographically, with Europe and the Americas accounting for close to 80 per cent of world arrivals, we see that these two regions have lost market share over the last 25 years," he said.

The World Tourism Organisation sees international tourist arrivals jumping to 702 million by the turn of the millennium and to more than one billion by 2010, Mr. Savignac said.

Spending on travel abroad would rise five-fold to hit \$1,550 billion a year from \$265 billion in 1990.

The market share enjoyed by Europe and the Americas would drop to 73 per cent from 79 per cent in 1995, while East Asia and the Pacific would rise to 22 per cent from 1995's 15 per cent.

"East Asia and the Pacific has had in the last 15 years the highest rate of growth," he said. "And the projection into the future continues to make it the fastest growing region as a tourism destination in the world with an annual growth rate of 7.6 per cent from 1990 to 2010."

As income increased in China more Chinese would travel into the East Asia and Pacific region, Mr. Savignac said. And as Europe became richer and long distance air fares grew cheaper, the fashion towards new and exotic destinations should also ensure continuing expansion.

U.N. official: Palestinian National Authority facing bankruptcy

OCCUPIED JERUSALEM (AP) — Israel Sunday eased a three-month closure that has kept Palestinian workers at home, and a senior U.N. official said Yasser Arafat's self-rule government was near bankruptcy because of the economic squeeze.

Israeli officials said 11,000 Palestinians had been allowed to return to their jobs in Israel — a loosening of restrictions imposed after a series of suicide bomb attacks by militants claimed 59 victims in Israel.

Terje Larsen, the U.N. coordinator in the Palestinian areas, said the Palestinian National Authority was nearly broken because of the closure and at least 50,000 Palestinians would have to be allowed in to stave off a crisis.

"The Palestinian National Authority may be bankrupt in not many weeks," Mr. Larsen, of Norway, said in an interview.

Washington (AFP) — International financial institutions should make better use of their resources and practice the austerity they preach to their clients, a senior U.S. Treasury official said here.

"Frankly, I am troubled by the frequency with which I see old friends travelling well in front of me when I fly coach," Deputy Treasury Secretary Lawrence Summers told a bankers' association.

Citing a plan under consideration by the World Bank and the International Monetary Fund (IMF) to ease the debt load carried by some

There are fears that Mr. Arafat may have to start cutting back the public payroll, which employs more than 50,000 police, teachers, medical staff and civil servants, if aid is not forthcoming.

Representatives from 30 donor nations, including Israel, will meet in Gaza on Tuesday to discuss the aid programme that has sustained the Palestinian government since its creation two years ago.

The donor nations pledged at a meeting in Paris in January to cover the Palestinian deficit of nearly \$75 million. But after the closure the deficit is projected to be almost doubled, or \$180 million.

"If the new (Israeli) government doesn't allow Palestinians back to work places the budget deficit may increase critically," Mr. Larsen said. "In addition, the international community has

to come up with significant contributions now to save a fiscal crisis."

Mohammad Nashashibi, the finance minister in Mr. Arafat's self-rule government, told the Associated Press the Palestinian economy has lost about \$6 million a day as a result of the closure.

He also said there was "economic paralysis" in construction, manufacturing, foreign trade and consumption with economic activity falling more than 35 per cent in March and 45 per cent in April.

"All these (Israeli) measures have caused damage to the Palestinian economy. These measures cannot continue and are violations of all the agreements," he said.

Mr. Nashashibi's office said unemployment exceeded 75 per cent in some parts of the Gaza Strip, where 800,000 Palestinians live.

'World Bank, IMF should make better use of resources'

of the world's poorest countries, Mr. Summers said: "Multilateral institutions should depend primarily on their own resources for the

debt relief they provide. We cannot expect bilateral contributions to be a significant source of funding for this purpose."

Under the Patronage of Her Majesty Queen Noor Al Hussein
For the First Time in Jordan
The National Music Conservatory Noor Al Hussein Foundation
the Embassy of the Republic of Germany
and Goethe Institut
in cooperation with
The Ministry of Tourism and Antiquities
present

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(12 harps, violin and cello)

Friday, 7 June 1996 - 8:00 p.m.
Amman Palace - Amman Citadel

The program includes pieces by Bach, Vivaldi, Paganini, Tchaikovsky and many others.

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- Al-Ahli Abela Superstore, tel. 688461
- Allstar Flowers, tel. 827695
- Babiche, tel. 661322
- Café Moka, tel. 856285
- Charcoars, tel. 07-927106
- Freddy for Music, tel. 692696
- Goethe Institut, tel. 641993
- Music Box, tel. 815745
- Romero, tel. 644227
- National Music Conservatory, tel. 687620

Ticket price: JD 8

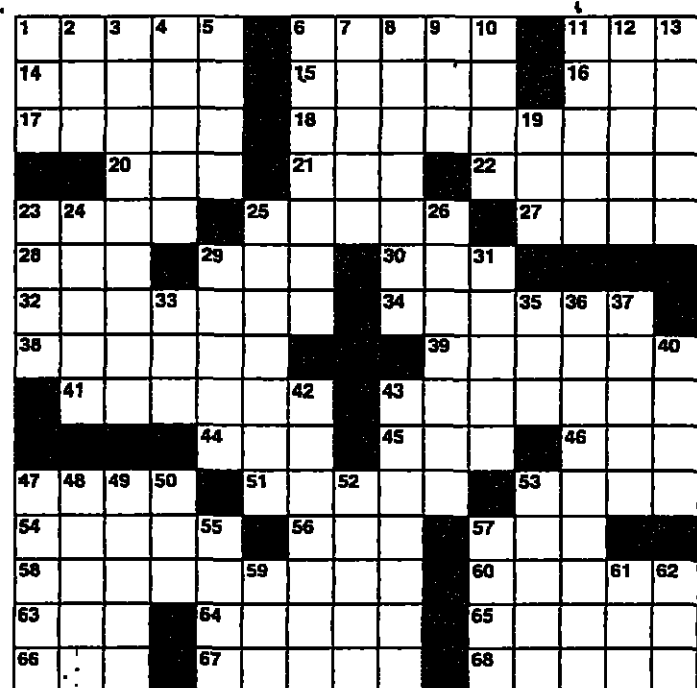


PAN EAST TONES

THE Daily Crossword by James Barrick

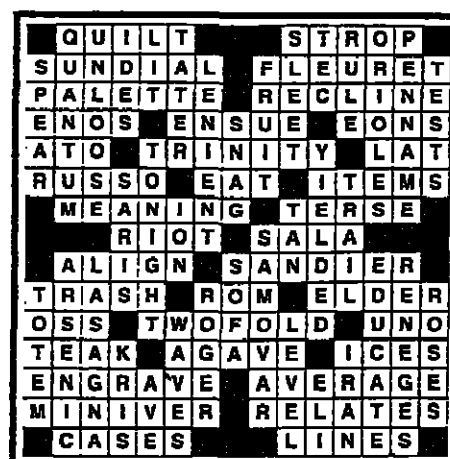
ACROSS

- 1 Indispensables
- 6 Moves little by little
- 11 Right-angled bend in a pipe
- 14 Nile River city
- 15 Ms. Thomas
- 16 Golf club part
- 17 Nile River city
- 18 Theater
- 20 Head
- 21 Raised railroads
- 22 Regularity
- 23 Travels
- 25 Lovers' meeting
- 27 Be dependent for support
- 28 Powdery residue
- 29 To and —
- 30 Period
- 32 Pittsburgh player
- 34 Join metal parts
- 38 Asian kingdom, once
- 39 Weighty
- 41 Danish port
- 43 Plummeted
- 44 Mix or Brokaw
- 45 "— byones..."
- 46 Botanist Gray
- 47 Indian garment
- 51 He was Mr. Spock
- 53 Difficult journey
- 54 Like a contortionist
- 56 No longer working; abbr.
- 57 In favor of
- 58 Disintegrate
- 60 Zodiac sign
- 63 Holiday time
- 64 Championship
- 65 Mother-of-pearl
- 66 Ruddy
- 67 Derisive look
- 68 Belgian city



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- 4 Starchy plants
- 5 Parvenu
- 6 Sovereign ruler
- 7 Waste time
- 8 Green plants
- 9 TV Tarzan
- 10 Ron
- 10 London district
- 11 Musical piece
- 12 Worthless one
- 13 Distrustful
- 19 Hockey's Bobby
- 23 Struggle for air
- 24 Bone; pref.
- 25 Renegade's crime
- 26 Streetcar
- 29 Spark producer
- 31 Northern native
- 33 Dir. letters
- 35 Rather or Duryea
- 36 — Burroughs
- 37 Della the singer
- 40 A state; abbr.
- 42 Arab ruler's domain



- 1 Name for a stranger
- 2 Can. neighbor
- 3 Tender of animals

- 43 Conspirer
- 47 Morley of TV
- 48 Century plant
- 49 Angered
- 50 Badly
- 52 Blackbird

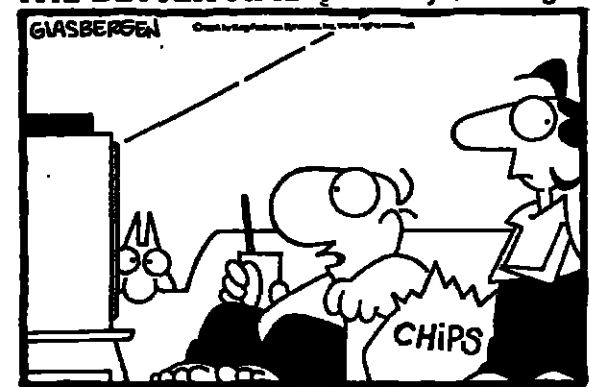
- 53 Judaic law
- 55 Diner sign
- 57 Snake's weapon
- 59 Brooch
- 61 Sea bird
- 62 Collection

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SAMICK ONE YEAR OLD BABY GRAND PIANO, IMPORTED ALL THE WAY FROM ENGLAND. EXCELLENT CONDITION ASKING PRICE JD 5,000

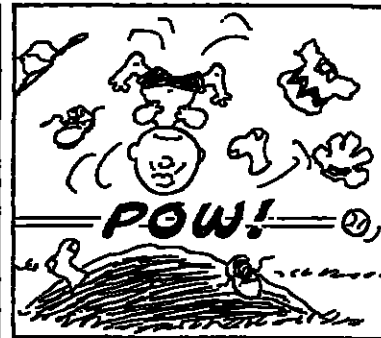
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THE BETTER HALF By Glasbergen



"Finally, a talk-show topic I can relate to: Men Who Are Too Good-Looking."

Peanuts



Andy Capp



Mutt'n Jeff



HOROSCOPE

FORECAST FOR MONDAY JUNE 3, 1996

ARIES: (March 21 to April 19) In the morning today, you can get your ideas to the attention of others successfully, however after lunch a worrisome matter crops up. This evening you should leave all of your concerns about business at the office at this time.

TAURUS: (April 20 to May 20) Quietly make arrangements for increasing abundance for the days ahead in the morning today, however later this evening avoid one who is pessimistic and who will look upon all of your ideas in a negative light.

GEMINI: (May 21 to June 21) You can come out of a ticklish situation through the auspices of a good friend today, then later this evening join a humanitarian social group who have some ideas on how you can make your career activities more successful.

MOON CHILDREN: (June 22 to July 21) Avoid a new contact at this time who wants to use your sympathy. Get ideas from a prominent person on how to gain your goals with your career and use those suggestions to their fullest to increase your income.

LEO: (July 22 to August 21) Join a friend today at some new place where you can obtain advanced data and use it cleverly, however later this evening avoid a disagreement over a bill which you discover was your responsibility to negotiate down.

VIRGO: (August 22 to September 22) Plan how to get greater expertise at your career activities as the week opens and make the days ahead brighter for you and your loved ones. Later this evening you can spend some quality time with your mate.

LIBRA: (September 23 to October 22) Please a new contact with your fine sense of humor and improve the relationship. Don't allow a whining fellow associate disturb you today or you will not get of your current career activities accomplished.

SCORPIO: (October 23 to November 21) You are able to gain more profits from the activities you engage in today, so pursue them with much enthusiasm. Later this evening make contact with a knowledgeable person to discuss some adverse conditions with a project.

SAGITTARIUS: (November 22 to December 21) Take a fellow associate out to lunch today and discuss some project which is of mutual importance. Be clever in the ideas which you come up with at this time and present them in such a fashion to get the approval of a bigwig.

CAPRICORN: (December 22 to January 20) Take more time to make your home look more charming in the morning today, and then be sure to drive carefully while you are on the highway. Later this evening spend some time with some close friends and have fun.

AQUARIUS: (January 21 to February 19) Arrange a meeting today with one you enjoy very much, however take care you do not over spend later or you could find yourself low on funds when it really matters. Tonight you can spend some time with your loved ones.

PISCES: (February 20 to March 20) Talk over monetary affairs with your family in the morning today, and come to a fine agreement. Rest up this evening for the hectic week ahead and you can get much accomplished with career activities.

Birthstone of June: Emerald — Citrine

Cash shortage delays planned Arab Gulf power grid

ABU DHABI (AFP) — Arab Gulf states are delaying a project to link their electricity networks in a common grid because of a lack of funds, a Bahraini official has said.

"Finance is the only problem," said Nabeel Maskati, director of planning and studies at Bahrain's electricity and water ministry.

"If the project gets the due finance, it will be completed within the next five years," he told the United Arab Emirates (UAE) daily Emirates News.

Electricity undersecretaries from the six Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC) states, which control nearly

45 per cent of the world's oil, failed to approve funds for the project at their talks in Riyadh last month.

They decided to hold another meeting with their finance counterparts to discuss possible private participation in the plan.

The common grid has been in the cards for several years but has been held up by financial and political obstacles.

Officials expect the \$1.9 billion network to save nearly \$752 million and ensure supplies to any member in an emergency.

The project has two phases, with the first covering Saudi Arabia, Bahrain, Qatar and Kuwait.

Mr. Maskati said he was not sure whether the project, part of economic integration among the six members, would be privatised.

"There are many proposals. But I can not guarantee that it will be privatised. The plan is to draw private finance," he said. "This means not public shareholding companies. It may be suppliers, private electrical establishments and the like."

GCC states, which created their economic, political and defence alliance in May 1981, are targeting a common market that could make them the biggest oil power in history and one of the main consumer markets.

Business booming on the Internet

By Nathan Morley
Special to the Jordan Times

AMMAN — Internet technology has created a host of progressive entrepreneurial ventures that for some, have blossomed into big business.

Since its introduction to the Jordanian public on March 27, of this year, the Net's user base and its appeal has been booming.

Majdi Beitshwish, marketing manager at Sprint/Global One, said: "Our current number of service subscribers is approaching 1,000. Within the next two months, we expect that number to double."

Many industry insiders predict the Internet will soon become as common as the

television.

For entrepreneurs, the beauty of the Internet lies in the ability to communicate efficiently and effectively anywhere in the world.

The consumer base on the Internet is not limited by proximity, but is, quite literally, boundless, and the number of products and services associated with Internet technology is staggering.

How is money being made using Internet technology? Bradley Curtis, software manager at Entex Information Services in New York, U.S.A., outlined three common ways to capitalise on the Net.

"The first option," explained Mr. Curtis, "is to create a Web site and sell advertising space on it. This can be difficult because you must produce a page that will attract thousands, or hundreds of thousands of people everyday."

So many people must visit the page that companies will want to invest advertising dollars into the site. This method has enormous earning potential.

Some sites currently on the Web are earning well over \$60,000 per month from advertising revenue.

"Second, an individual or business can sell products or services directly to consumers on the Net. This method is efficient and can be a cost-effective way to get products or services to consumers."

"Third, a service provider sells Internet access and a space on the World Wide Web."

"An organisation, for example, may subscribe with a service provider in order to establish an Internet presence. Individuals or organisations use service providers as their link to the global Internet audience."

"Beginning a service provider business requires a large initial capital investment for equipment and an extensive working-knowledge of computers to get off the ground."

But just as the width and breadth of the Information Superhighway is limitless, so are technology-based, money-making possibilities.

Creative entrepreneurs are establishing Internet-related businesses that are as progressive as the technology they support.

Arabia On Line, based in Amman, for example, creates Web pages for regional companies, customising the site according to the organisation's needs.

Khaldoon Tabaza, director of Arabia On Line, said, "We provide a service to organisations by getting them on the Web. We design and produce pages and secure a place for

clients on the Web."

"We have created sites for companies to sell their products directly over the Internet. Some companies offer banking services, crafts, regional products, or information on their site."

The Internet's arrival in Jordan has brought business opportunities to many—almost too many, according to some.

"There seem to be a lot of businesses in this industry doing what we do here at Arabia On Line," Mr. Tabaza said. "Many companies are out there trying to capitalise on technology. That is why we don't restrict ourselves to local companies."

"To be successful, we have found we need to maintain a regional clientele."

Where does an Internet-related business begin? Mr. Curtis said, "Just like any entrepreneurial venture, you've got to start with a good idea. You need to find a niche, a demand that is not being supplied and fill the gap."

"Be creative. There are a lot of hidden opportunities out there."

For those Net novices who want to get themselves online, or just want to see what all the fuss is about, introductory Internet courses are available.

Tamer Al-Ser, an Internet Consultant at Business Optimisation Consultants in Amman said, "We offer training courses to anybody interested in learning about the Internet, how it works, and how to use it."

Students in the course are allotted a time slot during which they can surf the Net and see for themselves what is offered on the infamous Information Superhighway.

Those looking to learn Hyper Text Mark-up Language, or HTML—the computer language used to create Web pages—will not currently find courses on advanced Internet programming in Jordan.

Mr. Tabaza said, "Currently in Jordan, there are very few people who know HTML, the computer language used on the Internet."

"Presently, there are no instructional courses being offered that I know of. To learn HTML you should go directly to the Internet or buy an instructional book like 'Netscape Gold.'"

As the technology becomes more pervasive, the products and services that support the Internet will become more available.

Even though the resources in Jordan, a new-comer to the World Wide Web, are scarce at the moment, the opportunities are there, and some local business have turned earning potential into real profit.

DAILY BUSINESS

A review of news from the Arabic press

Study examines Israeli and Palestinian markets to enlighten Jordanians

★ MORE THAN 75 per cent of Israeli consumers have expressed desire to buy Jordanian products and goods once exports start to the Israeli market, a study has revealed. The results of the study, conducted by a semi-official Jordanian institution to measure the Israeli receptiveness to Jordanian products and the possibility of marketing them in that market, also showed that 146 Israeli companies were interested to cooperate with Jordan in various areas such as subcontracting, joint ventures, technology transfer and licensing.

Quality was the top criteria for the Israelis on deciding to purchase the products, the study pointed out. As such, Jordanian companies have to focus on the quality of their products and shape of packaging to be able to compete in the Israeli market, noted the Jordan Export Development and Commercial Centres Corporation which conducted the study.

"There is an opportunity to successfully market 31 different Jordanian products in the Israeli market," the study said indicating that clothing, textiles, sanitary paper, cleaning material were the most important in addition to some foodstuffs, house appliances and sanitary materials.

The study recommended that only products of high quality and strong competitiveness be exported first to Israel to improve the image of Jordanian goods to the Israeli consumer.

It demanded that the Israelis increase customs exemptions on Jordanian products from 20 per cent and 50 per cent to 100 per cent to enable the Kingdom's products compete strongly in Israel.

The corporation also conducted another study on the Palestinian market showing that Jordanian products have a wide opportunity to export goods to the West Bank and Gaza. Noting that the quality of most Jordanian products were relatively better than the Palestinian ones, the study said that social ties and the similar consumption patterns in Jordan and Palestine would provide a good opportunity for Jordanian products to enter the Palestinian market without any need for changes on the products stressing that there are restrictions on exporting some products, especially foodstuffs, to the markets of the West Bank and Gaza due to Israeli terms, the study advised Jordanian exporters to price their products according to the prevailing rates and to adopt the policy of discounts in order to acquire a good share of the market and achieve higher sales and profits.

The study cautioned that Jordanian products will face competition from Arab, European, Asian and American products because of the agreements signed between these countries and Israel. Palestinians import 956 per cent of their needs from Israel and only two per cent from Jordan whereas 75 per cent of Palestinian exports go to Israel and 22 per cent to Jordan (Al Dustour).

Financial Jordan Times
Markets In co-operation with
Cairo Amman Bank

Foreign Exchange Market Summary (May 27-May 31, 1996)

AMMAN — The U.S. unit depreciated noticeably against sterling and the mark, while it appreciated marginally against the yen last week. It ended the week 2.64 per cent and 1.36 per cent lower against sterling and the mark, respectively, and 0.14 per cent higher against the yen.

While New York closed Monday 27-5-1996, on Memorial Day holiday, the dollar depreciated marginally against sterling, while it appreciated against the yen and the mark Tuesday. The dollar rose after eleven major Japanese commercial banks announced combined losses of \$13.8 billion, during the fiscal year ending 31.5.1996, compared to profits of \$402 million in the previous year. In addition, the above mentioned banks still faced problem loans valued at \$115 billion, which prompted speculation that the Bank of Japan will not raise interest rates in the near term. Furthermore, the dollar received safe haven support, following comments from a North Korean military official, who indicated that North Korea has plans to invade South Korea. The dollar reached a 16 month high against the mark before dipping on profit-taking.

The dollar depreciated noticeably against sterling and the mark, and marginally against the yen Wednesday. Analysts indicated that the dollar fell below key support levels, after it failed to breach resistance at 1.55 marks and 109 yen. The dollar came under pressure following a sharp decline in the U.S. bond and stock prices, which pushed the dollar/mark exchange rate to 1.5330, and the dollar/yen exchange rate to 108.05. Analysts indicated that an auction of U.K. government bonds put further pressure on the dollar against sterling.

The U.S. unit continued its depreciation against the yen and sterling, while it appreciated slightly against the mark Thursday. In addition, the dollar resumed its depreciation noticeably against sterling and the mark, while it appreciated slightly against the yen at the end of the week. The 30-year U.S. Treasury bond dropped by one full point and its yield increase to seven per cent adversely impacting the dollar exchange rates. This drop was prompted by remarks from a former Federal Reserve Board governor, who expected the Fed to raise short term interest rates by 0.5 per cent in July. In addition, the dollar fell against sterling on short-covering of sterling positions. Moreover, the dollar came under pressure following comments from a Swiss National Bank official, who called for a stable and independent Swiss franc, which enhanced dollar selling against the Swiss currency.

The U.S. unit, thus, ended the week at 1.5225 marks, 108.05 yen and at \$1.5513 to pound.

Central Bank of Jordan Exchange Rate Bulletin
Date: June 2, 1996

Currency	Bid	Offer
U.S. Dollar	0.7080	0.7100
Sterling Pound	1.0969	1.1034
Deutsche Mark	0.6545	0.6568
Swiss Franc	0.5664	0.5692
French Franc	0.1372	0.1379
Japanese Yen*	0.6545	0.6578
Dutch Guilder	0.4150	0.4171
Swedish Krona	-	-
Italian Lira*	0.0458	0.0460
Belgian Franc	-	-

* Per 100

AMMAN FINANCIAL MARKET											
HOUSING BANK OFFERED 1996 - 1997											
ORGANIZED MARKET SECTOR PRICE LIST FOR SUNDAY 02/06/1996											
PAST 12 MONTHS HIGH	LOW	COMPANY'S NAME	P / K	DIV.	NO. OF TRANS.	NO. OF SHARES	VALUE TRADED JD	OPEN PRICE	CLOSE PRICE	CHANGE	PERCENT
260.000	205.000	ARAB BANK	12.3	1.66	3	120	26940	224.58	224.50	-	-
4.820	4.120	JOR. NATIONAL BK.	13.4	3.35	11	60700	267888	2.45	2.44	-01	-
2.700	2.240	INDUSTRIAL DEV. BK.	5.2	6.23	12	4650	10590	2.29	2.27	-02	-
8.380	4.240	THE JORDANIAN BK.	11.8	3.12	7	3512	6661	4.43	4.42	-01	-
3.040	2.600	JOR. TRUST BANK	20.4	0.00	11	1710	5010	2.80	2.81	+01	+
1.900	1.920	JOR. GULF BANK	6.0	7.00	22	6910	6924	1.00	1.00	-	-
6.180	3.300	JOR. ISLAMIC BANK	19.0	0.00	5	2190	6292	3.95	3.95	-	-
4.480	3.300	JOR. DEV. FIN. BANK	19.2	0.00	1	1200	355	3.57	3.55	-02	-
1.260	1.410	ARAB BANK DEV.	9	0.00	26	42900	20693	1.48	1.48	-	-
MARK SECTOR TOTALS			INDEX: 178.28	CHANGE: -0.05	94	182748	416092				
3.370	2.600	JORDAN GULF BANK	6.5	5.17	1	200	580	3.05	2.90	-15	-
INSURANCE SECTOR TOTALS			INDEX: 121.78	CHANGE: 0.00	2	230	706				
1.920	1.530	JOR. REINSURANCE CO.	11.1	7.50	19	5800	9249	1.60	1.60	-	-
2.950	2.200	KIDDER MINERALS	11.8	5.83	1	100	240	2.40	2.40	-	-
2.720	2.190	KIDDER PIPER	9	0.00	5	1350	1690	1.40	1.40	-	-
1.510	1.980	SARAKA INSURANCE	11.1	0.00	6	3250	3153	1.98	1.99	+01	+
2.540	1.870	UNION CO.	11.1	4.76	8	3800	7970	2.10	2.10	-	-
1.200	1.820	UNION LAND DEV.	9	0.00	2	500	830	1.07	1.06	-01	-
SERVICE SECTOR TOTALS			INDEX: 116.36	CHANGE: 0.00	41	14800	23072				
4.480	1.170	ATTANOROS	9	0.00	1	2500	3121	1.25	1.25	-	-
4.010	3.390	JOR. CEMENT FACT.	19.3	2.96	16	7127	24142	3.43	3.38	-05	-
3.700	2.800	JOR. PHOSPHATE INDUS.	32.4	0.00	4	350	1054	3.08	3.01	-07	-
10.880	8.900	JOR. PHOSPHATE INDUS.	13.9	5.79	19	2882	27821	10.37	10.37	-	-
8.000	7.000	JORDAN STEEL	7.7	0.03	4	1710	12227	7.15	7.15	-	-
3.820	2.910	INDUSTRIAL CORP. JOR.	39.1	0.00	2	12164	35257	2.91	2.91	-	-
5.760	3.660	ARAB PHARM. MANF.	20.3	6.41	15	2099	7780	3.75	3.70	-05	-
2.660	2.000	JOR. PAPER CORP.	11.5	5.80	1	250	518	2.10	2.07	-03	-
2.660	2.000	GENERAL KIDDER	7.1	10.87	3	1550	4278	2.76	2.76	-	-
6.360	4.570	ARAB ALUM. IND.	7.2	8.79	3	250	1138	4.57	4.55	-02	-
1.740	1.450	LIVESTOCK & POULTRY	9	0.00	83	178600	101402	1.24	1.24	-	-
1.500	1.240	ARAB PAPER CORP.	8.4	8.25	5	1850	2294	1.24	1.24	-	-
1.450	1.450	NATIONAL INDUS.	12.4	7.14	15	14800	12432	1.44	1.44	-	-
2.800	1.060	INTERNATIONAL INDUS.	9	0.00	60	10500	27802	1.41	1.45	+04	+
1.300	1.030	JOR. REINSURANCE CO.	9	0.00	4	1950	2118	1.09	1.09	-	-
5.250	2.650	NATL. CABLE WIRE MFG.	22.3	0.00	14	5750	20721	2.51	2.57	+16	+
1.950	1.950	JOR. REINSURANCE CO.	9	0.00	14	2700	3904	1.05	1.06	+02	+
2.520	1.080	ARAB PHARM. CHEM.	27.7	0.00	20	8400	8021	1.02	1.04	+04	+
3.580	2.380	UNIV. MOD. INDUS.	7.8	7.75	7	3850	9937	2.69	2.88	+01	+
2.390	1.380	JOR. REINSURANCE CO.	20.3	0.00	18	4295	6957	1.63	1.62	-01	-
2.000	1.000	JOR. NEW CABLE CO.	31.2	0.00	10	4350	4984	1.14	1.15	+01	+
1.880	1.880	JOR. NEW CABLE CO.	11	0.00	11	2479	4562	1.08	1.03	-05	-
1.240	1.130	INTEL. TOBACCO	29.9	0.00	4	755	972	1.27	1.27	-	-
INDUSTRIAL SECTOR TOTALS			INDEX: 114.50	CHANGE: -0.56	336	277552	322850				
GRAND TOTAL			INDEX: 146.00	CHANGE: -0.25	473	475300	762719				
PARALLEL MARKET SECTOR PRICE LIST FOR SUNDAY 02/06/1996											
1.880	1.700	JOR. TRADE FAC.	19.7	0.00	1	280	189	1.74	1.74	-	-
1.050	1.050	ZARA FOR INVESTMENT	21.7	0.00	1	280	275	1.08	1.10	+02	+
1.000	1.000	CHRON DEV. CO.	77.5	0.00	3	780	233	1.81	1.82	-	-
1.300	1.300	ARAB FIN. INVEST.	9	0.00	14	6650	5188	1.78	1.79	+01	+
1.690	1.340	JOR. TRADE FAC. JEMCO	9	0.00	16	23100	14377	1.84	1.82	-02	-
1.690	1.340	ARAB FOOD & MFG.	8	0.00	1	600	12345	1.88	1.87	-01	-
1.940	1.340	ARAB FOOD & MFG.	8	0.00	9	8500	613	1.65	1.65	-	-
1.220	1.220	ARAB FOOD & MFG.	8	0.00	3	1250	7020	1.78	1.78	-	-
1.100	1.100	ARAB FOOD & MFG.	8	0.00	10	10000	5733	1.87	1.88	+01	+
1.150	1.150	ARAB FOOD & MFG.	8	0.00	9	5241	4783	1.93	1.94	+01	+
1.150	1.150	ARAB FOOD & MFG.	8	0.00	1	650	377	1.88	1.88	-	-
1.010	1.010	ARAB FOOD & MFG.	8	0.00	8	12000	572	1.69	1.69	-	-
1.010	1.010	ARAB FOOD & MFG.	8	0.00	1	100	54	1.55	1.54	-01	-
1.010	1.010	ARAB FOOD & MFG.	8	0.00	5	1218	877	1.75	1.72	-03	-
1.010	1.010	ARAB FOOD & MFG.	8	0.00	3	770	262	1.72	1.72	-	-
1.500	1.700	IND. EAST COMPLEX	8.2	0.00	39	23400	20072	1.72	1.70	-02	-
GRAND TOTAL					165	126392	96010				
I : New 12 months high											
S : New 12 months low											
D : Stock dividend during the past 12 months											
L : Listed during the past 12 months											
P : P/E ratio is 100 or more											
F : Floating P/E											
B : Bidding in M/A or B/A for the next recent year											

Christie wins 7th European Cup

MADRID (AFP) - British Olympic 100 metre champion Linford Christie won his seventh successive European Cup 100 metres here Saturday and dropped a hint that he may defend his crown in Atlanta in July.

Christie, 36, showed no adverse reaction to three false starts running 10.04 seconds, shaving one hundredth of a second off the cup record he set in Lille last year.

"I'm running even better this year," said the British team captain in an apparent challenge to the Americans that he will beat them in Atlanta.

Christie, who announced last year he would not run in Atlanta because of press intrusion and insisted he would retire altogether at the end of the season, left no-one in doubt that his speed and sharpness remain.

"That was the first time I had really let it go this season. It was my first real test and I have to be happy with the result and the time," he said.

"This is my legacy year. Anything I leave behind is for the others to follow. It's all going well in training and on the track. But the most important thing is that I'm enjoying myself," added Christie.

Christie hoped to compete in Sunday's 200 metre event, although he had a tight hamstring which meant he missed the sprint relay.

Another athlete well pleased with his performance would have been Jon Ridgeon.

Ridgeon, fifth in the 1988 Seoul Olympic 110 metre hurdle final, battled his way to second in the 400m hurdles in his first appearance for the team for nearly four years.

Ridgeon, on his third comeback after four achilles operations, had the bonus of lowering his season's best to 49.84.

European champion Duane Ladejo took the 400 metres and 1500 metres man Antony Whitehead on his outdoor international debut thought he had been promoted to second after Germany's Rudiger Stenzel was disqualified for barging.

However, his and Britain's joy at finishing the day third only four points



Britain's Olympic champion Linford Christie speeds in front of France's Pascal Theophile on his way to win the 100 m race during the European Cup athletics meeting June 1. Christie won his seventh consecutive 100 m event in 10.04 seconds, with the aid of a slight following wind. Theophile finished in fourth place with a time of 10.34 seconds (Reuters photo)

behind Germany turned to despair later when the 1500 metres result was altered. Stenzel was re-instated to second place, with Whitehead demoted to third.

Thus Germany hold the overnight lead on 71 points, followed by Italy (61) and Britain (58).

British women's captain Sally Gunnell punched the air in delight after winning the 400m hurdles in her second comeback race — after struggling in her first a week earlier.

The Olympic champion, ruled out last season by a heel injury, had finished third at a meeting in Germany after missing up half the hurdles.

In Madrid, she was still some way short of her old technique, and trailed Tatyana Tereshchuk of the Ukraine coming off the final barrier.

But Gunnell gritted her teeth and powered through to win in 56.84secs — a victory that will do her performance a power of good, even though it was a second slower.

"I was so nervous — it felt like the Olympic final," she said afterwards. "I was disappointed with the time, but the wind caused a lot of problems."

Triple jumper Ashia Hansen matched Gunnell's victory, but double world champion medalist

Kelly Holmes had to be satisfied with second in the 800m — and lost her place at the top of the world rankings.

Svetlana Masterkova, of Russia, took her place with 1:57.87, resisting every attempt her rival made to overhaul her in the home straight.

Holmes ran 1:58.20, then talked about soon having to make "the biggest decision of my life" — whether to go for the 800m, the 1500 or both in Atlanta.

Germany also lead the women's standings on 53 points ahead of Russia on 49 and Ukraine on 40. Great Britain were fifth on 32 points.

Olympic ticket deliveries begin

ATLANTA (AFP) — Ticket deliveries for next month's Atlanta Olympics have started in Georgia and will begin Monday for the remainder of the United States.

Armed security will protect the precious cargo of 3.8 million tickets being delivered to 311,000 addresses between now and June 10 by a parcel delivery firm.

Three Atlanta suburbs where the heaviest number of ticket orders stemmed received their deliveries Friday, with outlying areas receiving delivery Saturday. Of all seats sold, 45 percent were bought by Georgia residents.

A total of four million tickets were reserved for Olympic officials and sponsors with 3,862,895 million tickets sold in the past 13 months since purchases began. Nearly 600,000 seats were sold by telephone or computer.

About 3.1 million tickets remain on sale, with football preliminaries and baseball among the most available sport sessions.

Any unsold tickets will be available at venues during the games.

Syndicate to use Internet in America's Cup campaign

SAN FRANCISCO (R) — Leaders of a San Francisco-based America's Cup Challenger Syndicate plan to use the Internet in their campaign to bring the prized yachting trophy back from New Zealand.

The St. Francis Yacht Club announced Saturday that Jim Clark, chairman of the Silicon Valley high-tech company Netscape Communications Corp., will chair the newly-formed syndicate, "AmericaOne".

Clark, whose company is an Internet high-flier, said he had an idea for using the global computer network to raise money to back San Francisco's bid, although he declined to give details.

"We can certainly generate a lot of traffic from Netscape into some America's Cup-type site (on the Internet). The issue is how do we leverage that traffic to get better sponsorship and good funding for this effort?" Clark said.

Tens of millions of dollars are needed to mount a successful America's Cup campaign, but the syndicate did not reveal how much it expected to spend.

Clark, a keen yachtsman, said his involvement in the syndicate was personal and

Netscape was not making any financial commitment to it.

"I'm in it because I think I can bring other resources to bear, not to spend my own money. I've got a personal level of commitment and it's substantial, but it's not the whole banana," Clark said.

In addition to high-tech fund raising, the AmericaOne team also plans to rely on old-fashioned sailing experience it bids to bring the trophy home.

St. Francis Yacht Club said in May that America's Cup veteran skipper Paul Cayard would lead its challenge in New Zealand in 2000.

Veteran America's Cup yacht designer Bruce Nelson will lead AmericaOne's design and technology team and John Kostecki, an Olympic silver medalist, has been named tactician.

AmericaOne is one of 11 syndicates from nine countries that have so far announced intentions to challenge team New Zealand, which won yachting's most prestigious trophy in San Diego last year — only the second non-U.S. team to win the 145-year-old contest.

Technology sponsors and

suppliers already include Science Applications International Corp and Silicon Graphics Inc, both California companies that have played a role in the design of past America's Cup-winning yachts.

The mission for AmericaOne is to win back the America's Cup with American technology and an American commitment to excellence in all levels of the programme, Cayard said.

Asked whether he hoped to hold a 2003 America's Cup Regatta on San Francisco Bay if he won in New Zealand, Cayard said:

"I think that bringing the races right here to San Francisco Bay would be exactly what the America's cup needs."

Speaking in view of the Golden Gate Bridge, Cayard called the bay "the world's natural theatre for sailing."

Cayard is a five-time sailing world champion with several America's Cup campaigns under his belt. He was part of Dennis Conner's losing team in 1995, skipper of Italian finalist Il Moro Di Venezia in 1992 and a tactician for a U.S. challenger syndicate in Perth, Australia in 1987.

Bulls' Longley on roll entering NBA finals

CHICAGO (AFP) — After facing down Alonzo Mourning, Patrick Ewing and Shaquille O'Neal, Chicago center Luc Longley is ready for any challenge in the National Basketball Association finals.

The Australian center averaged 6.7 points, 4.9 rebounds, 1.1 blocks and 22.4 minutes of playing time against the tremendous trio of NBA star centers during the NBA Eastern Conference playoffs.

Longley by no means got the best of his rivals, but he did make them work for their success and showed some flashes of his own in helping the Bulls go 11-1 in post-season play.

"Overall, I was very happy with my play against them," Longley said. "We got through all of those series relatively unscathed, although each of them had their games where they got away from me a little bit."

The Bulls also rotated reserves Bill Wennington, James Edwards and John Salley in the middle to accompany Michael Jordan, Scottie Pippen, Dennis Rodman and Toni Kukoc.

Longley was whistled for 60 fouls, committed 23 turnovers and missed 59 percent of his shots in the first three playoff rounds. But his work on defense was rewarding and his opponent in the final will

not be as fierce. "Defense has been and still will continue to be my primary focus," Longley said. "But I won't be quite as busy in the next series. Still, the last thing you want to do is say it's going to be easy from here on."

Tendinitis in the knees has bothered Longley much of the season. An operation to ease the knee pain after the finals will prevent Longley from playing for Australia in the Olympics next month.

But an eight-day break between the last game of a sweep against Orlando and the start of the finals next Tuesday will help Longley. "Problems like Luc's tend

to be a cumulative thing," Bulls' trainer Chip Schaefer said. "This will help keep his head above water. That's an advantage for him."

Longley was toiling for the woeful Minnesota Timberwolves, who dropped 67 games in one season four years ago. Now, he has filled a key void in what might be the greatest team in NBA history.

"You can't put it into perspective," Longley said. "It's a whole different world. It's a different echelon. As a result, you enjoy your day to day existence a little more."

Swim coaches threaten FINA rule

ATLANTA (AFP) — If world swimming governing body FINA will not police the sport and answer to competitors, it will be replaced, a group of swimmers and coaches from four nations warned.

The World Swimming Coaches Association has pushed for changes in FINA in a fight that will come to a head at the Atlanta Olympics, when the FINA congress will be conducted.

Former Olympic and world champions joined coaches from Australia, New Zealand, Canada and the U.S. in a letter to Sweden's Gunnar Werner, FINA's secretary general.

"There is widespread dissatisfaction with FINA's handling of both the anti-doping actions and the reporting of these actions to member federations," the letter said.

Failed Chinese drug tests from the 1994 Asian games were not revealed until after a doctor who knew of the results questioned why they had not been made public.

The group also wants swimmers and coaches on the decision-making FINA board, a proposal made by US swimming, and greater details of FINA's finances made public to those whose efforts bring the group its money.

Asian rivals prepare for World Cup partnership

SEOUL (R) — With a mixture of hope and scepticism, South Koreans and Japanese on Sunday contemplated the task of overcoming a century of animosity to jointly host the 2002 World Cup soccer finals.

Friday's decision by world soccer's governing body, FIFA, to jointly award the event set a huge challenge for the two Asian neighbours with a tormented history marked by Japanese occupation of the Korean peninsula.

"Co-hosting the World Cup could be a breakthrough in resolving long-held spite between the two nations," said Lee Yeon-Taek, a professor at Seoul's Hanyang University.

"If FIFA had decided to allow one of the two countries to host the World Cup alone, it could have given a grave shock to the other side, leaving another grudge between them."

Not everybody was so optimistic about a successful partnership in the hosting of the first World Cup finals to be held in Asia, an event likely to attract a worldwide television audience of some four billion.

Some fear the World Cup could become hostage to often impassioned feelings.

Relations between Japan and South Korea are tetchy at best, even though their economies are closely tied and they are strategic partners in northeast Asia.

Many Koreans openly despise the Japanese who colonised Korea for 35 years until 1945 and forced thousands of Korean women to become sex slaves of the imperial army.

Last month a rightwing member of parliament of Japan's governing coalition, Tadashi Itagaki, questioned whether young Korean women really were used as "comfort women".

The issue of "comfort women" — the estimated 200,000 women, mostly Koreans but also Filipinas, Chinese and Indonesians pressed into sexual servitude during World War Two — is still political dynamite in South Korea, and

Itagaki's comments sparked outrage.

Choi Sang-Yong, a Korea University professor, said: "We will have to closely watch the Japanese right-wing conservative force's move against co-hosting."

In a telephone call to Japanese Prime Minister Ryutaro Hashimoto Saturday, South Korean President Kim Young-Sam stressed "the spirit of rapprochement", one of Kim's aides said.

Hashimoto was quoted as saying he expected the co-hosting would "greatly contribute to improving friendly relations".

Earlier, Hashimoto said co-hosting was "really a good thing". He added: "There is nothing wrong with both countries working to pursue one goal," and pledged full government backing for the World Cup.

But one Japanese newspaper saw only "a tinderbox of new conflicts".

Over the weekend both countries appeared determined to put a brave face on FIFA's decision, even while scaling back their plans for new stadiums, reducing the number of cities in each country that will host matches and revising downwards their respective cut of the profits.

On Saturday night South Koreans went ahead with gala events to celebrate the FIFA decision with more than 50,000 spectators jamming a sports stadium for a music fiesta.

Free beer was flowing in many bars and restaurants all night in Seoul as jubilant soccer fans got into a festive mood.

A host of details must now be worked out, most notably who will stage the opening ceremonies and the final match. "Among the organisational issues, the thorniest in the negotiations between the two sides would be who will host the final match to end the tournament," said a South Korean public relations executive associated with Seoul's World Cup bid.

"Unless the two sides come to a compromise in this issue, it could lead to a failure in the co-hosting."



German national soccer player Jurgen Klinsmann (L) tries to score while France's Lilian Thuram watches during their friendly match in Stuttgart June 1. France won the match by 1-0 (Reuters photo)

Swedes off to good start; French down Germans

PARIS (AFP) — Striker Kenneth Andersson was on target twice as Sweden made a sizzling start to their World Cup qualifying campaign with a 5-1 victory at home to Belarus in their group four match Saturday.

Andersson netted a 20th-minute penalty and was on target again in the 62nd minute as the Swedes, who finished third in the United States two years ago, dominated their outgunned opponents.

Martin Dahlin (30th), Patrick Andersson (77th) and Hendrik Larsson (87th) also scored, while Valentin

Belkevitch grabbed a 75th-minute consolation goal for Belarus in front of over 30,000 spectators at the Rasnuda Stadium in Solna.

Defender Laurent Blanc scored with a superb sixth-minute header as France surprised fellow Euro '96 finalists Germany 1-0 in a friendly match in Stuttgart.

France extended its unbeaten run to 22 straight matches ahead of next week's start of the European Championships in England but things are rather less rosy for the traditionally-powerful Germans, who were booed from the field by their fans.

The Germans drew 1-1 with Northern Ireland Wednesday.

Blanc's goal came when he steered home an accurate free-kick from Youri Djorkaeff, but the French spent a large portion of the match on the defensive.

The Czech Republic stunned Switzerland 2-1 in Basle as the two teams continued their final preparations for Euro '96.

German-based Pavel Kuka scored once in each half for the Czechs, while Switzerland, who face tournament hosts England in their opening match of Euro '96 next weekend, got

their goal from French-based striker Marco Grassi.

Italy, one of the favoured teams for Euro '96, also won a warmup match — defeating Hungary 2-0 in Budapest with a sixth-minute strike from Pierluigi Casiraghi and a second-half own goal from Janos Banfi.

Romania, meanwhile, concluded their preparations with a 3-1 victory over Moldova in Bucharest.

The Romanians scored three times in the space of 12 minutes to seal their win with Chelsea's Dan Petrescu heading the first in the 28th minute.

Ramtha win JSF Shield

By a Jordan Times Staff Reporter

AMMAN — Al Ramtha Sunday won the Jordan Soccer Federation (JSF) Shield title when they overcame Al Hussein 2-0 in the final match at Al Hassan Stadium in Irbid. The win secured Al Ramtha the Shield title for the fourth time. They last won it in 1993 and had also won in 1989 and 1990.

The Shield, reserved for Premier League teams only, is the second of four annual competitions organised by the JSF. Al Faisali already clinched the first title of the season when they beat Al Wihdat in the Cup Winners' Cup, the opening match of the soccer season.

Al Ramtha had reached the final after knocking out titleholders Al Wihdat 3-1. Al Faisali were also knocked out of the Shield when they lost to lowly Al Qozazi 2-1.

Al Hussein, whose win in the 1994 final brought them their first major title, reached the final after a 2-1 win over Kufroun.

Al Wihdat and Al Ramtha have won the title a record four times, Al Faisali three times, Al Jazireh and Amman twice and Al Hussein only once.

Schumacher wins Barcelona Grand Prix

BARCELONA (AFP) — Two-time world champion Michael Schumacher underlined his supremacy when he drove Ferrari to their first victory of the season in pouring rain in the Spanish Grand Prix at the Catalunya track Sunday.

The German, who scored his 20th Grand Prix victory, clocked consistently faster laps than his nearest rivals — Frenchman Jean Alesi, second in the Benetton-Renault, and Canadian Jacques Villeneuve, who took third in the Williams-Renault. But Schumacher, who had described the Ferrari as "uncompetitive" during qualifying, had no explanation for his complete domination of the race, which he won by 45 seconds.

"I can't explain that — it must be the nature of the circuit," he said. "The car was handling well and our strategy was perfect."

Nevertheless, he firmly rejected any suggestion that it was a race lost by his competitors.

"We didn't get a gift from anyone — I pushed it to the victory," he said.

Schumacher's long-time rival Damon Hill maintained his overall championship lead on 43 points despite sliding his Williams-Renault into a wall early in the race.

Schumacher and Villeneuve now share equal second place in the overall standings on 26 points, throwing the overall driver's competition wide-open.

French Open

Graf, Courier through; Huber, Chang eliminated

PARIS (AGENCIES) — A one-and-a-half hour rain break and a spirited late fight-back by her opponent held up Steffi Graf's 6-1, 7-6 (9/7) victory charge against eleventh-seeded Mary Joe Fernandez of the United States to reach the quarter-finals of the women's singles at the French Open here Sunday.

At one stage the defending champion, who is joint top-seed with Monica Seles, was serving for the match at leading 5-3 in the second-set.

She then trailed the 1993 finalist 0-4 in the tie-break before surging back to clinch victory. The actual match lasted 91 minutes.

Graf now plays fifth-seeded Iva Majoli of Croatia a winner over Spanish qualifier Gala Leon Garcia for a place in the last four.

Meanwhile, former champion Jim Courier ended the French Open hopes of tenth-seeded South African Wayne Ferreira here Sunday, when he recovered from a shaky start to score a 4-6, 6-1, 6-3, 6-3 victory and reach the quarter-finals of the men's singles.

Courier, the 1991 and 1992 champion, now plays either compatriot and world number-one Pete Sampras or Scott Draper of Australia.

Fifth-seed Majoli came back after trailing 0-3 to score a 6-3, 6-1 victory

over Gala Leon-Garcia of Spain and reach a quarter-final showdown with defending champion Steffi Graf.

Leon-Garcia, the first qualifier to reach the fourth-round of the women's singles since Janine Thompson of Australia in 1989, needed heavy strapping to her right thigh at the start of the second-set and although she continued, she was clearly in increasing pain.

Leon-Garcia, 22 and ranked 107th, has been playing with the same two rackets for the last four-and-a-half months waiting for a delivery of new rackets from her sponsor.

"I have been re-stringing them before each match and hoping they do not break," said Leon-Garcia. Slovakia's Karina Habsudova caused the fifth major women's casualty at the French Open tennis championships, beating sixth-seeded Anke Huber of Germany 7-5, 6-3.

The victory of Habsudova, a finalist at Berlin, meant Australian open runner-up Huber followed in the footsteps of exiled seeds Mary Pierce of France, Holland's Brenda Schultz-McCarthy, Martina Hingis of Switzerland, and Austria's Barbara Paulus.

Jana Novotna, who suffered a humiliating loss to American Chanda Rubin here twelve months ago,

showed nerve when the going got difficult in the second set to beat Irina Spirlea of Romania 6-1, 7-5 and reach a showdown with joint top-seed Monica Seles in the quarter-finals of the women's singles at the French Open here Saturday.

The tenth-seeded 27-year-old Novotna, beaten by Rubin in the third-round in 1995 despite leading 5-0, 40/0 in the third set, chalked up her victory in 68 minutes on a sun-drenched number-one show court.

A semi-finalist here back in 1990, Novotna has been having an excellent clay-court season.

Before arriving in the French capital she won the Spanish Open in Madrid last weekend and reached the semi-finals at Hilton Head. She also won both her Fed Cup matches in the group two match against Canada on clay.

Edberg ousts Chang; Seles, Ivanisevic advance

A rejuvenated Stefan Edberg, having taken revenge on Michael Chang for his defeat in a memorable 1989 final, has his sights set on the only Grand Slam title to elude him so far in his last French Open.

"If I'm playing the way I am it's possible. I know that," said the Swedish former world number one of

his chances after a 4-6 7-5 6-0 7-6 third round victory over fourth seed Chang on centre court, scene of their 1989 epic.

"I'm playing some of my best tennis in a long, long time. To beat Michael here you need to play very well," said Edberg, who was a hugely popular winner with most of the crowd siding with the 30-year-old veteran of 13 French Opens from the start.

Asked whether he had recalled the 1989 clash, the pair's only other meeting on clay when he squandered 10 break points in a fourth set he dominated, Edberg said: "I did think about it. Then I saw my chance in the tie-breaker."

"Of course I would rather win in a final, but it was good revenge. It doesn't quite make up for it, but another four matches would," he added with a grin.

"You can't play too much from the past," said Chang. "You can take confidence from it, but you can't think it will help you win again."

Chang, who became the youngest winner of a Grand Slam title at 17 years and three months when he took the 1989 final, also believes Edberg can go one better.

"I feel excited here being the last time. I'm not tired, moving well and serving a lot better than in a long time," said Edberg, who imposed his fine serve and

volley game in a tournament last won by that kind of player 13 years ago.

Edberg explained his current popularity by saying that players seem to give something new to the circuit and again when they got older, adding with a grin: "Connors was extremely popular once he got past 30."

Earlier Monica Seles beat Magdalena Maleeva of Bulgaria 6-1, 6-1 in her fourth-round match.

Goran Ivanisevic booked a fourth round place in the French Open tennis championships and admitted parting with coach Bob Brett had brought him a new-found freedom.

Ivanisevic, who thrashed Czech Republic's Bohdan Ulihrach 6-4, 6-2, 6-2 in just 69 minutes, said his new lease of life had helped him on the court.

He said he had had a tough two months at the end of last year before winning the Grand Slam Cup in December.

"I changed my coach and I think I got a little more freedom into my game, into my life, with a new coach."

"As soon as you get freedom off the court, you put that into the court," said the Croatian who has twice reached the Wimbledon finals.

Karbacher beat Paul Haarhuis of the Netherlands 4-6, 6-4, 6-2, 6-3.

What they've been saying at the French Open

"I don't feel the ATP represents the players. It's about making money, spending money, and it's not so much about sport as it should be. We've got to get tennis to the kids again and make them understand that tennis is a game and it's supposed to be fun — not 'how much money did you earn this week?'" — Michael Stich, asked about the American influence on the ATP Tour.

"I still have space to improve everything." Iva Majoli, looking to improve still further her world ranking.

"You can't play one tournament on clay and think you can play good at the French Open." — Goran Ivanisevic, asked about the shock early defeat of third-seed Andre Agassi.

"Obviously we've both been struggling with injuries but finally this is a tournament where both in and hopefully we shall both do well. I'm looking forward to playing her again." — Steffi Graf, on a possible title showdown against arch-rival and joint top-seed Monica Seles.

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Assad, Hrawi hold talks after Netanyahu win

DAMASCUS (Agencies) — Lebanese President Elias Hrawi and his Syrian counterpart Hafez Al Assad met on Sunday to coordinate policies following the election of right-wing Benjamin Netanyahu as Israel's new prime minister.

Syrian presidential spokesman Joubran Koorieh said Syrian Vice-President Abdul Halim Khaddam was also present at the meeting at the presidential palace in the coastal resort of Latakia, some 350 kilometres north of Damascus.

Mr. Hrawi's visit to Syria is the first since Mr. Netanyahu, who opposes the return of Israeli-occupied lands to Arabs, narrowly defeated Prime Minister Shimon Peres in last Wednesday's election. Syria is the main foreign power broker in Lebanon where it has some 35,000 troops. Mr. Assad played a central role in bringing about an agreement ending a 17-day Israeli air and artillery blitz on Lebanon in April in response to rocket attacks by Hizbollah guerrillas on northern Israel.

Diplomats said the Assad-Hrawi talks were part of intensive contacts between Arab leaders to discuss the impact of Mr. Netanyahu's victory on the Middle East peace process.

They said Mr. Assad was expected to visit Egypt soon for talks with President Hosni Mubarak.

Officials said on Saturday that U.S. President Bill Clinton had assured Mr. Assad in a message of Washington's continued commitment to make peace in the region.

The U.S.-sponsored Syrian-Israeli peace talks are stalled over the fate of the Golan, security arrangements and future ties.

Israel broke off the last round of peace talks with Syria and recalled its peace team from Washington in March after a wave of suicide bombings by Palestinian militants which killed 59 people in Israel.

Lebanon's peace talks with Israel opened as part of the Arab-Israeli peace confer-

ence in Madrid in 1991 and broke off in February 1994. "President Clinton reaffirmed the commitment of the United States in favour of a just, global and permanent peace in the region," the agency said.

U.S. Secretary of State Warren Christopher said Friday that he spoke with several Arab leaders, including Syrian Foreign Minister Farouk Al Sharaa, after Netanyahu's victory in Israeli elections.

Mr. Christopher said he urged the Arab leaders "not to pre-judge the new (Israeli) government."

A Syrian paper on Sunday warned Mr. Netanyahu against making any moves that would threaten the Middle East peace process.

"After the return to power of the Israeli right-wing party Likud, we will be watching for any threat to the foundations of peace aimed at undermining the (peace) process," said the ruling Baath Party's newspaper.

Al Baath added that "peace is not the only issue Netanyahu must address to avoid the spectre of war."

The paper said "the American administration is the key party in whom we must put our faith to reach a conclusion to the peace process. The Americans must keep the Israeli leaders in hand and make them comply with international resolutions, regardless of whether they belong to Likud or to the Labour party."

The official daily Al Thawra called on the "international community to stop Israeli leaders undermining or threatening the peace process which is currently at a crossroads."

The paper said time was needed for the new Israeli government to be announced, but it warned: "Israeli leaders must understand that Syria will accept no compromise on Arab rights to the Golan and to other occupied territories."

Mr. Netanyahu said during the campaign that he would not enter into discussions over the return to Syria of the Golan Heights.

Labour Party leaders examine why Shimon Peres lost election

TEL AVIV (R) — The man hailed by U.S. President Bill Clinton as "one of the great peacemakers of our time" gave half a century of his life to a people who did not care enough to elect him.

Five times in five tries, Shimon Peres failed at the Israeli ballot box — this time in squeaker to 46-year-old Benjamin "Bibi" Netanyahu.

Israeli commentators said people just did not love him. "It is not a question of love," retorted cabinet minister Yossi Beilin, 48, who for more than 18 years has served in political jobs under Mr. Peres. "There are political reasons."

Even as the Labour Party licked its wounds, younger men who would succeed Mr. Peres as his chairman — Foreign Minister Ehud Barak, a former army chief, and Interior Minister Haim Ramon, a political maverick — began jockeying for the job.

Voter cynicism about Mr. Peres' peace promises hurt the Israeli leader.

So did alienation among religious Jews, who came out in droves for Mr. Netanyahu — and anger among Arab voters over civilian carnage in Israel's April "Operation Grapes of Wrath" blitz of Lebanon.

It did not help Mr. Peres, 72, that he devoted a lifetime to defending Israel, shaping its aviation industry and even securing its nuclear reactor.

Mr. Netanyahu — and a majority of Israelis — blamed the Israeli leader for thinking he could make peace with Palestinians when suicide bombers were blowing away scores of Israelis.

"The terrorist attacks in February and March this year did something, had an impact on the results," Mr. Beilin acknowledged in a Reuters interview.

In campaign broadcasts and at their own debate, Mr. Netanyahu said he too could make peace — a secure peace, he said — and he hammered away at Israeli fears.

He said Mr. Peres not only had failed to stand up to Israel's enemies but had also secretly planned to make concessions that no "patriot" could accept, such as the division of Jerusalem. Mr. Peres vehemently denied the charges.

Ironically, when Mr. Peres did get tough during the campaign, it hurt him. His blitz of Lebanon in April aimed to stop Hizbollah guerrillas from firing rockets at Israel.

But the killing of more than 200 people, mostly Lebanese civilians, in the bombardment shocked Israeli Arabs — who punished Mr. Peres at the polls.

Borrowing a page from his assassinated predecessor Yitzhak Rabin, Mr. Peres tried to look the military man, wearing a black bomber jacket and touring the frontline with his generals.

But Labour's campaign chairman Benjamin Ben-Eliezer said the Israeli Arab protest vote cost Mr. Peres

the mere 30,000 votes he needed to beat back Mr. Netanyahu.

Politicians close to Mr. Peres said Labour suffered also at the hands of religious Jews who had the impression that the party, especially in its coalition with the leftist Meretz bloc, did not have their interests at stake.

"The readiness of the religious voters in Israel to vote for Bibi was in a way not expected by us, not in the same dimension — and they were zealous about his victory," Mr. Beilin said.

Labour party officials expect Mr. Peres to head the opposition at least long enough for the party to mend.

Yet already the Israeli media are full of reports of a growing political rivalry between Mr. Ramon, a former trade union federation leader, and Mr. Barak, who in the army devised many tactics against the Palestinian uprising that erupted in 1987.

Hamas renews its warning to Israel

OCCUPIED JERUSALEM (R) — The militant Islamic Resistance Movement Hamas vowed on Sunday to go on resisting Israel after the election of right-wing leader Benjamin Netanyahu as long as it occupied Palestinian land.

Hamas said in a leaflet, its first official statement since Wednesday's Israeli elections: "We in Hamas reaffirm the continuation of resistance as long as occupation persists."

The group did not say how it would resist and there was no mention of military attacks or jihad (holy war or struggle). Hamas leaders in Gaza refused to comment on the leaflet.

Hamas, opposed to the Palestine Liberation Organisation (PLO) peace deal, claimed responsibility for four suicide bombings that killed 59 people in Israel in February and March.

Its exiled leadership rejected last week's call by the movement's spokesman in Gaza, Mahmoud Zahar, to the group's military wing to halt attacks before the Israeli elections because it did not want to appear to be taking sides.

But Dr. Zahar said the military wing, Izzeddine Al Qassam, had accepted his appeal.

"The (right-wing) Likud party and the (centre-left) Labour are two sides of one coin. Both made Palestinians suffer," Dr. Zahar said after the elections in which Mr. Netanyahu defeated Labour Party Prime Minister Shimon Peres.

After Mr. Netanyahu's victory, Hamas leaders gave warning of renewed violence if the new prime minister did not honour peace deals with the Palestinians.

"We in Hamas see that the results of these elections reaffirm that the political approach of our movement is right, which is, that the Palestinian people's problem with the Zionists is one of occupation," the leaflet said.

"After weeks of anticipation, the Zionists have chosen their new rulers, affirming the mistake of those who wrongly bet on illusory changes in the Zionist society towards coexistence and peace," Hamas said.

It called on all Arabs to "unite to face the new situation."

Opposition parties say Israeli elections proved hostility towards Arabs

AMMAN (J.T.) — Opposition parties said Sunday the outcome of the Israeli elections held last Wednesday clearly underlined the Jewish state's hostility to the Arab Nation and rejection of international legitimacy in general and U.N. Security Council resolutions in particular.

A statement issued Sunday said the opposition parties' leaders held an emergency meeting to discuss the situation in the region after "the Jewish elections in occupied Palestine."

The statement, a copy of which was made available to the Jordan Times, said the election did not produce unexpected results but stressed facts on which the Jewish state was based.

"The Jordanian opposition parties view (Israeli Prime Minister Shimon) Peres and (Premier-elect) Benjamin Netanyahu as two faces of the same coin. They both agree on denying the Palestinian people their right to establish their independent state and their natural right to self-determination," the statement said.

It added that Mr. Peres and Mr. Netanyahu both refused to withdraw from occupied Palestinian lands and seek to establish a substitute homeland for the Palestinians in Jordan.

The parties said the Israeli elections had restored things to the way they were before the 1992 Madrid conference, which launched the Middle East peace process.

"We again stress what we warned of the dangers inherent in the Oslo agreement (between the Israelis and Palestinians) and the Wadi Araba (Jordanian-Israeli peace) treaty and the perils threatening the Arab Nation, its existence and future, as well as its rights in Palestine and other Arab lands," said the statement.

It called for mobilising Arab masses to enable the "Arab Nation to rise up to the level of challenges facing it" and to be able to defend its rights.

It also urged Arab leaders to unify their ranks to fend off threats facing their countries.

British businessmen see no Saudi discrimination

DUBAI (R) — Diplomats and business executives in Saudi Arabia said on Sunday they saw no signs of discrimination against British firms because of the presence of a Saudi dissident in London.

They said media reports that some companies were losing out on lucrative contracts in the world's largest oil producer and exporter had so far not been substantiated.

"The majority of British companies are doing business and are not seeing any discrimination. They judge the situation by what is happening on the ground," one Western diplomat said.

The continued presence in Britain of Mohammad Al Masari had raised fears London would lose multi-billion dollar deals with Riyadh, a major trading partner and arms customer.

The British government sought to deport him but on appeal he won the right to

reside in Britain for four years.

Several British executives, who asked not to be identified, told Reuters some companies were concerned but that there were no indications either from government departments or private Saudi companies that they were not being favoured in business deals.

"What is happening is that when a British company loses a contract, the first thing it does is blame it on political reasons. But there is no proof to that," an engineering company executive said.

One British businessman said some British companies "feel a little bit anxious, but we don't see a reason to panic."

He said he had heard of British firms which won contracts with the Masari controversy, but did not have details.

A British embassy official said at least four British firms

had won Saudi deals since the Masari controversy began.

"We have also organised visits, exhibitions and trade missions in Saudi Arabia with full cooperation (of authorities) and with great success," he told Reuters.

Britain has 114 joint ventures in Saudi Arabia with total capital of 3.4 billion riyals (\$906 million). 1994 figures show.

Another British embassy official said: "We have been assured by Saudi officials at the highest level that there is no policy of discrimination against British firms."

The executives said British Foreign Secretary Malcolm Rifkind was planning to visit Saudi Arabia, but did not know when.

Mr. Rifkind said recently that Saudi Arabia had assured Britain that it would not discriminate against British firms.

Britain has asked British firms claiming trading prob-

lems with Saudi Arabia to produce proof.

Engineering group Babcock International said in April it had stopped bidding for Saudi contracts after it lost three or four in seven months amid political tension.

It said it had no direct proof.

The Financial Times newspaper on Friday said documents showed that British civil engineering contractors had been excluded by Saudi Aramco from bidding for oil and gas projects.

Since the mid-1980s Saudi Arabia and Britain have concluded arms deals worth more than \$30 billion for a variety of sophisticated weapons including ships and aircraft.

British firms are in the running for several deals including battle tanks, missiles, warplanes and other commercial orders.

First plane lands at Gaza airport

RAFAH (Agencies) — Palestine President Yasser Arafat's new official plane on Sunday inaugurated Gaza's first international airport.

"It's one of the most important projects, and this shows how we are moving to implement the peace process," Mr. Arafat told reporters after his 13-seat Dutch-made plane landed in the Palestinian self-rule zone.

Palestinian pilot Ziad Aziz, who flew the plane from Egypt, waved a small Palestinian flag from the cockpit as the plane touched down on the newly-built 2,700-metre runway. The plane was a gift from the Algerian government.

Workers and engineers cheered.

"I landed in all the world's airports, but this landing was the first in the history of Palestine," said Mr. Aziz. "I couldn't control my tears when I spoke to the Palestinian control tower."

Israel still controls air, land and sea access to Gaza, and Israeli officials were at the airport to demonstrate that continued sovereignty. Mr. Arafat, surrounded by jubilant Palestinian police, walked to the plane clutching the hands of two Israeli policemen.

The airport has one runway. Officials said they expected to complete a terminal within a year.

They said the airport is expected to cost \$48 million, of which \$18 million has already been spent.

"This represents sovereignty and independence and is the start of the creation of a Palestinian state," declared Mr. Arafat.

"This is the realisation of a very important project which is vital for the Palestinian territories," he said, before taking the hands of the two Israeli officers and telling them, "you are most welcome here."

Mr. Arafat was scheduled to use the air strip for the first time Monday when he takes off for an official visit to London, but no other aircraft have been authorised to fly in or out of the airfield, officials said.

Shlomo Dror, spokesman for the coordinator of Israeli activities in the Palestinian territories, said further negotiations were needed before the Gaza airport could be completed and become fully operational.

Israel and the Palestinian National Authority (PNA) signed a preliminary agreement late last month on opening the airfield after months of wrangling over how responsibility for security at the facility would be shared by Palestinian and Israeli authorities.

Under the terms of the agreement, the airport was declared a "special area" where Israeli authorities would retain overall responsibility for security in checking incoming and outgoing passengers and freight, Mr. Dror said.

Israel's Ben-Gurion international airport outside Tel Aviv will handle air traffic control, he said.

Mr. Dror said subcommittees set up to resolve the final outstanding issues concerning security and air traffic control should submit their reports within two to three weeks and until then no aircraft other than Mr. Arafat's would be authorised to land.

Report: A woman hiding in Picasso's oil

TOKYO (AFP) — A Japanese art scholar has used an infrared video camera and computers to discover an image of a woman hidden beneath layers of oil in a masterpiece by Pablo Picasso.

A U.S. expert on Picasso's works believes that the hidden woman, snuggling up with the man who appears on the surface of the canvas, is a mistress of the flamboyant Spanish genius, the Kyoto News Agency reported Saturday. Sadao Miura, a specialist on scientific preservation of cultural assets, took 20 infrared images of the 1923 painting, entitled *Salimbanque Seated With Arms Crossed*, and analysed them with computers, Kyodo said. The woman has been discovered in the painting which Mr. Miura believes is a self-portrait of Picasso. The work is on display at Tokyo's Bridgestone Museum. William Rubin, a former curator at the New York Museum of Modern Art, said the woman could be a mistress of Picasso, according to Kyodo. Mr. Rubin said that during a three-week period in August 1923, Picasso drew about 200 images of the mistress and she was a model for about 40 of his oil paintings. In one of these paintings, the face of the mistress supplanted that of Picasso's wife, the American said. The findings were to be presented at a symposium of art preservation specialists under way in the ancient Japanese city of Nara, Kyodo said.

Sri Lanka hotels cash in on blackout

COLOMBO (R) — Sri Lanka's drought and last week's three-day power blackout might have left most people in the dark but not Colombo's plush hotels. "We've had a full house since Thursday," a spokesman for the seafarer Taj Samudra Hotel told Reuters Sunday. "A couple of months ago the occupancy rate was about 50 per cent, sometimes below 50 per cent." The story was the same at other five-star hotels, powered by their own diesel generators, which have suffered a tourist drought since Tamil Tiger rebels, fighting for a homeland in the north and east, stepped up attacks in Colombo last year. "Expatriates and some locals have come in," said a spokesman at the Hilton Hotel. "We've been almost sold out. Most came in for the air-conditioning rather than the water." Ceylon Electricity Board Labour Unions went on strike Wednesday to oppose privatisation moves. The protest came as the country was already undergoing six-hours-a-day power cuts after monsoon rains failed to fill hydro-electricity reservoirs.

Trapped child rescued from bank vault

PHILADELPHIA (R) — Rescue workers battled for nearly five hours Saturday to save a three-year-old boy who mistakenly locked himself in a bank vault in Philadelphia. Landon Garcia had wandered into the vault of the Rittenhouse Square branch of Midland Bank while his mother was cleaning offices after the bank closed. Firefighters said they first drilled a small hole through the ceiling of the vault to enable the boy to breathe. They also left enough room to push through candy and a small TV camera. Next, a bigger hole was drilled to enable firefighter Mike Foley to ease into the vault, and pick up the boy.

NEWS IN BRIEF

U.S. public favours pressure on Israel

WASHINGTON (AFP) — A majority of Americans, favouring Israel by withholding economic aid if the new Israeli government stops or slows the Middle East peace process, a poll showed Saturday. The Newsweek poll conducted Friday showed 69 per cent of those surveyed believe Washington should actively promote the Arab-Israeli peace process through diplomatic means even if new Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu slows progress. Asked whether the United States should pressure Israel to continue the peace process or risk losing economic aid and other support, 59 per cent said Washington should, 30 said it should not and 11 per cent were undecided. Thirty-five per cent in the survey said the U.S. should support creation of a Palestinian state, while 39 per cent were opposed; that compared with 31 per cent in favour and 44 per cent opposed in a 1981 poll. The latest survey of 761 adults was conducted by Princeton Survey Research Associates and has a margin of error of four percentage points.

Qatar agrees to Saudi mediation in dispute

MANAMA (AP) — Qatar has agreed to withdraw a petition at the international court over a territorial dispute with Bahrain, but only if Saudi mediation can achieve a breakthrough. "When the Saudi mediation finds a satisfactory solution to the dispute for both parties we will withdraw the case," Qatar's foreign minister said. "Our door is still open for reaching a solution," the official Saudi Press Agency quoted Sheikh Hamad Bin Jasssem Al Thani, the Qatari minister, as saying. Bahrain on Friday called on Qatar to withdraw its case at the International Court of Justice and solve the dispute through direct talks or Saudi mediation. Both parties had in the past sought Saudi mediation, but Qatar took the case to the International Court of Justice five years ago. Bahrain, on its part, has rejected the court's jurisdiction and boycotted its sessions.

Britain rejects Libyan offer to try suspects

CAIRO (AP) — Britain has again rejected a Libyan proposal to try two suspects in the 1988 bombing of a Pan Am jet in an international court, an Egyptian newspaper said Sunday. Libya has repeatedly suggested trying the two Libyan suspects in an international court, but Britain and the United States have insisted the men be turned over to them for trial. Libya is under U.N. sanctions for its refusal to surrender the suspects. Arab League Secretary-General Esmat Abdul Meguid again carried the Libyan offer during a recent trip to Britain.

British school in S. Arabia receives warning

DUBAI (R) — The British school in the Saudi capital Riyadh said security authorities had been alerted to a written warning sent to the school, respecting nervousness among Westerners in the kingdom. The school, also known as Saudi Arabian International School, told parents in a letter handed to pupils on Saturday that it had received "a written communication which, whilst not directly threatening, could be construed as such." The school letter, a copy of which was obtained by Reuters, did not disclose the contents of the warning. "This has been passed to the British embassy who have taken up the matter with the Saudi security authorities," said the letter, which was dated May 28.

Serb hardliners' poll victory 'could shatter Bosnia'

SARAJEVO (R) — The Bosnian government wants mid-September elections on time but fears the likely victory of Serb hardliners would legitimate their isolationist policy and eventually lead to secession, a senior official said on Sunday.

"The elections will only help Karadzic's hardliners win international legitimacy," Bosnian Ambassador to the United Nations Mohammad Sacirbey told Reuters in an interview.

"Once they win under international auspices they can really crack down on democracy, on refugees, seal their borders, do whatever they want," he said.

"After the elections they will opt for obstruction in federation bodies and eventually secede and join Serbia."

The Dayton agreement split Bosnia into two almost

equal entities, the Bosnian Serb Republika Srpska and the Muslim-Croat federation, loosely bound together in a single sovereign state with joint governing bodies.

The agreement was signed last December by Slobodan Milosevic who had to apply fierce pressure on Bosnian Serb hardliners led by Radovan Karadzic to accept it.

The Dayton deal says Mr. Karadzic, an indicted war criminal, must step down. Not only he has refused to do so but instead has even shored up his position by sacking moderate politicians and cracking down on independent media.

The Dayton deal also stipulates freedom of movement and safe return of hundreds of thousands of refugees, victims of widespread ethnic cleansing.

All of Bosnia's three ethnic groups have violated the

Dayton principles to some extent by blocking the movement of rival refugees and harassing minorities.

But the Bosnian Serbs have been particularly obstinate. They have closed their borders to non-Serbs and over the past few weeks launched a new wave of expulsions of Muslims and Croats in the Teslic area to the dismay of the international community.

The Bosnian Serbs' obstructionist policy is now forcing the international community to pressure Mr. Milosevic to make good on his Dayton pledge to oust Mr. Karadzic.

The future of Mr. Karadzic was a key topic at Sunday's talks on Bosnia in Geneva. But many diplomats fear Mr. Karadzic is just a tip of the isolationist Serbian iceberg. Although Mr. Karadzic's equally hardline

deputy Biljana Plavsic on Saturday promised to change tack and allow freedom of movement, a free press and the return of refugees, diplomats are still deeply suspicious of her commitment.

Mr. Sacirbey said the entire situation has put the Bosnian government in a very tight spot.

The problem is that there are so many pressures now particularly on (Bosnian President Alija) Izetbegovic," he said.

Mr. Sacirbey argued that Mr. Izetbegovic was caught between his desire for elections only under the right conditions — a free press, freedom of movement and free association — and the international drive, led by the United States, to hold them at any price.

"So he (Izetbegovic) has to walk a very fine path. So far the path is — conditions

don't exist. We would hope the conditions exist. Philosophically we do want elections but under these conditions it does not make sense," he said.

He Bosnian diplomat argued the United States was insisting on premature elections to satisfy domestic pressures in the presidential race, and said the international community would be responsible if the Bosnian poll collapsed.

"The international community wants the elections and obviously they will get it. We feel like we are in a car behind the steering wheel while the West is stepping on the Gas. Our side of the car is in good condition while the other is out of alignment."

"What we are saying is, if you step on the gas in such a car it is bound to crash and you will be blamed," he said.